

# HIGHER CRITICISM

REV. ROBERT SINKER, D.D.



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“HIGHER CRITICISM”:

WHAT IS IT,

AND

WHERE DOES IT LEAD US?





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BY THE

REV. ROBERT SINKER, D.D.

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To

THE REV. PETER HAMNETT MASON, M.A.

*President and Hebrew Lecturer of St. John's College, Cambridge.*

*My Dear Mr. Mason,*

*It is now many years ago since you first pressed on me, as on your other pupils, that wise maxim of the Men of the Great Synagogue, "Be cautious in judgment." This is a principle that cannot be too rigidly insisted on in every branch of theological criticism, though it would seem that on many hands it is held nowadays in scant esteem.*

*Deep and hearty is my gratitude for your guidance and example in the application of this principle to the Hebrew Bible, and indeed for all the lessons of far past years, in which I, as one of a host of pupils, now scattered over England, and far beyond England, learned to approach the Oracles of Israel under the guidance of one who brought to the interpretation of the Sacred Books alike an unsurpassed scholarship, the keenest appreciation of literary beauty and a profound reverence for the Divine authority of Scripture.*

*I rejoice to take this opportunity of publicly expressing a feeling cherished so long.*

*Believe me to remain, my dear Mr. Mason,*

*Your affectionate friend and pupil,*

ROBERT SINKER.

TRINITY COLLEGE,  
*August 30, 1899.*



## PREFATORY NOTE

THE following attempt at showing the real nature and tendency of much of so-called "Higher Criticism" appeared originally in the pages of the *Record*, from which it has been reproduced, with but a few alterations, by the kind permission of the proprietors of that journal.

I would venture here again to point out, what I have several times stated in the following pages, that my object in writing has not been, save incidentally, to discuss how far this or that scheme of "Criticism" may be true or false, but to urge my readers to consider these schemes with their eyes open; not simply to drift without consideration into a world of new theories, but anyhow first to face the facts and to count the cost.

Archæology has already showed the falsity of many so-called "critical" rulings; till archæology has said its last word, it may be well to keep our judgments in abeyance on a good many more.

R. S.



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# “HIGHER CRITICISM:” WHAT IS IT?

## CHAPTER I

### THE MEANING OF THE NAME—WHAT MAY WE REASONABLY BELIEVE?

WHAT is “Higher Criticism,” and who are “Higher Critics”? Does the adjective refer to something appertaining to the critics themselves, or has it merely reference to the nature of the work? Needless to say, the latter meaning is the true one; the higher is opposed to a lower criticism, which is simply textual. The “lower,” or textual, critic occupies himself with settling the text of his document on the basis of such MSS. of his original as are available for him, together with ancient translations, when there are any, or quotations of the document in succeeding writers. The “higher” critic aims at more than this. He does not simply ask, What is the best text I can get of this work on such evidence as is attainable by me? but he takes up the whole matter of the literary history. Who was the author of this book? When did he live? Where

did he live? Is the work all of a piece, or is some of it by later hands? How far, then, can it be disintegrated into its original sources? and the like.

The man who endeavours to produce the best text that can be obtained from existing materials of, shall we say, "Pericles, Prince of Tyre," is a lower or textual critic. The man who seeks to make out, by any critical investigation in his power, whether and how far "Pericles" is a work of Shakespeare, may call himself, be the conclusion he comes to what it may, a higher critic.

Since, then, a "critic" is a judge, a "higher critic" on this definition will be one who weighs all available literary evidence on all possible questions that can arise as to his document. He may come to the conclusion that a document or a portion of one is spurious, or that it is entirely genuine; but whether he judges favourably or unfavourably is irrelevant to the main point. He is a judge summing up the evidence. It has somehow come about that the phrase "Higher Criticism" has, by a kind of convention, been specially associated with the Old Testament, and, by a strange perversity of use, restricted to those who maintain views hostile to the old traditional beliefs, and pre-eminently those who deny the authenticity (in the true sense of that word), in whole or part, of the Books of Moses. It is as though a judge upon the bench is only really a judge when he sums up adversely to the person

before him. Yet is it impossible for one whose views are (shall we call them) conservative to be a critic? When Dr. Lightfoot triumphantly exposed the bad scholarship and illogical logic of the book "Supernatural Religion," whose author prudently waited for the great Bishop's death before he plucked up courage to answer him — was not he a critic? or are conservative critics only allowed in the New Testament and not in the Old?

It may be said, indeed, that this use is simply a blundering phraseology on the part of those who know no better, a mere misuse of speech, which does not matter. But, in the first place, a misused term, when once it becomes general, is very apt to create an atmosphere of its own, in which arguments necessarily take a sort of unreal colour, and disputants are biassed from the beginning. Take such a word as *Catholic* when used as equivalent to *Roman Catholic*, as it is, not merely by Romanists themselves, but by many others who so use the word, regardless of its true meaning. In the very claim of the word is of course an implied argument, which will tell on certain minds. Yet how unfounded is the claim.

In the second place, it is not true that this misleading use of the word is confined to those whose opinion is of no consequence. A recent distinguished Bampton Lecturer treats "conservative writers" and "critics" as antithetical terms. Certainly it is largely the case that those who would defend the

old beliefs are by many spoken of as though they were obscurantists. They are viewed as the personages pictured so vividly in the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum* must have seemed in the eyes of Hutten and Reuchlin ; such as the worthy who told Erasmus that Cæsar could not have written the "Commentaries," because "whoever has much to do with warfare and constant labours, such a one cannot learn Latin. But the fact is that Cæsar was always in the wars and the greatest labours, therefore he could not be a scholar nor learn Latin" (*Epist.* 42).

That this charge of obscurantism is unfounded we shall presently seek to show ; we shall first briefly indicate the scope and intent of the present essay. There are "Higher Critics" who have the courage of their opinions, who are prepared to carry out the conclusions at which, after an elaborate process, they have arrived, to their logical results. They start unhampered by any belief that the Old Testament is directly God's Word, or, indeed, by any distinct recognition of the supernatural at all. If, then, the conclusions to which their arguments lead them go far to revolutionise the believer's view, not only of the Old Testament, but of the New—well, that is simply the natural outcome of the theory, *Caveat Christianus*. There are, again, "Higher Critics," reared up in the old beliefs, and happily unable to shake off their old compelling power, who make desperate efforts to blend their neo-critical conclu-

sions with their old beliefs, who seek, to the amazement or amusement, one would judge, of some of their Continental allies, to combine irreconcilable elements; to assume that persons whom the Church through all these ages has viewed as historic personalities, Abraham, for example, one recognised as such expressly by our Saviour, are but the personifications of a tribe or tribal deity, and yet that the value of the record concerning them is not a whit impaired. They tell us that Deuteronomy is a work by some one unknown, who in some way managed to hide his fabrication in the Temple in a place where it would be found; and, though he had made without authority the fullest use of the Most Holy Name, we may contentedly receive the book as inspired just as before. It seems to us that the effort is a pathetic one; but it speaks more for the deep-lying beliefs of these critics than for their logical consistency.

There are yet, again, persons who are not critics at all, but are in different degrees interested in the questions broached; some, indeed, looking on in distressed wonderment when statements are contravened which had seemed to them as steadfast as the heavens; some not troubling much to inquire what this new doctrine may mean, but insensibly attracted by the novelty. For them higher criticism is in the air, and half unconsciously they drift into theories without inquiring whither they will lead them. If they were asked, Why do you adopt

such and such a belief? the answer would very often be simply, Oh, it is the general view. Or it might be, Oh, it is the belief of A, B, and C, who are leading authorities. If, again, they were asked, How do you think such views will affect men's ideas of the Christian Faith? it would often be found that they had never given it a thought.

On the former we would urge the necessity of patient hope. In the belief of not a few whose opinion is worthy of attention there is already a plain ebbing of the tide. Certainly things do not stand where they stood twenty years ago, or even ten. It seems not so very many years ago that two parties stood face to face—the defenders of the old views, animated by the fullest belief, at times taking even an unreasoning turn, in their records; and a body of assailing critics, framing theory after theory, all alike purely subjective, showing undoubtedly certain weak spots in the fortifications they assailed, and growing more and more sweeping in their claims. Then, almost of a sudden, it seemed as if a new force made itself felt—a body of archæologists, bringing to light a marvellous mass of external evidence, refuting some of the claims of the critics, and throwing grave doubt on others. It is too soon yet to speak with precision as to the way in which matters will be adjusted when the smoke of battle clears away. Obviously this is the time for collecting fresh evi-

dence (and it is being collected to a marvellous amount), and for carefully sifting it; it is not the time for striking conclusions.

If it be said that there are some conclusions so logically perfect that no fresh evidence can affect them, it is sufficient to say that that remark has been made several times already, and the conclusions have had to be modified. Our own unhesitating conviction is that when things have found their level in another generation or so, it will be seen that on a host of minor points opinions will have to be modified, the real conditions of composition and transmission of the oldest books of the Old Testament will be more perfectly realised, false judgments on events, on sequence of events, on dates, will be rectified; but that in all essentials the fabric will be unaffected. Just as a simple child's conception of the story of Abraham differs from the conception of a pious man, so we believe will the beliefs of godly men of old on such points grow into the more perfect knowledge towards which we are tending. The Divine history remains Divine history still; it is not resolved into myths, or the persons into abstractions.

While, however, we feel that anything which can be done should be done to reassure those who, sorely tried by what they are constantly hearing, ask, "Are the foundations indeed shaken?" still, we are bound to confess, a yet greater urgency

exists to remind those who are, tacitly and without inquiry, acquiescing in what the "Higher Critics" declare to be established, not merely that the battle is not over yet, not merely that there are significant tokens of the turning of the tide ; but that it is their plain duty, nay, that it is simple common sense, to ask themselves and seek to realise the answer to the question, What is this "Higher Criticism" ? What does it lead to ? How far does its acceptance affect the Christian Faith in its deeper aspects ?

We repeat the words "without inquiry." Side by side with those who have studied the matter and come to this or that conclusion, with those, too, who cannot study the matter, but listen to much that is put forth with amazement and distress, there is yet a third body, and, we fear, a rather numerous one, who neither study, nor yet feel keenly in the matter, nor realise its importance, who yet drift into acquiescence of the dominant theories. They have only a very general conception of the results which are supposed to have been attained ; they fail to see the inevitable logical outcome of the theories on Christianity ; they suppose merely that the wisdom of the nineteenth century has exploded the antiquated ideas of our fathers as to the Old Testament. Having rectified these old-world blunders, we are then to go on much as before.



It is this last class that we have largely had in mind in writing the present essay. Our aim is not, save incidentally, to discuss the arguments *pro* and *con* for this or that theory. Ours is a humbler aim than that : it is to point out what "Higher Criticism" really amounts to, what it teaches, how that teaching, if accepted in its fulness, must affect the Faith.

At this stage there is a point which we seek to emphasise. "Higher Criticism"—we use the word in its true, not its conventional sense—should be a science, a matter of reasoning ; therefore in any piece of Higher Criticism offered to us we have a right to ask, we are bound to ask, on what axioms, what primary principles, it rests. Only let it be remembered what we mean by axioms : they are self-evident truths, compelling assent from every mind capable of reason.

We have no hesitation in expressing our own belief that many of the assumptions underlying the now dominant theory of Higher Criticism are things incapable of proof, though by no means of disproof, as Dr. W. L. Baxter has shown. The idea of the Three Codes, the denial of one central Sanctuary till the time of Josiah, and the like, are taken as axioms. Those who wish to see how these points have been laid down by the Higher Critics without logical justification are referred to Dr. Baxter's pages.

Our business here is only to *state* what we believe to be the case. It is that the theory rests on a basis

simply of hypotheses, true or false—false we believe them—claiming unwarrantably to be axioms.

But there is a further point. The question was asked in one of our literary journals last winter as to a book which would defend the traditional views as against the *English* Higher Critics. The querist laid stress on the marked difference between the irreverence of certain Continental Higher Critics — *e.g.* Wellhausen—and the reverent treatment of the subject by English critics, and rather scoffed at the work *Lex Mosæica* for illogically mixing up the two.

Yet the lack of logic was in the querist himself. Underlying the fundamental assumptions of the Continental critics to whom we refer, is the direct, the *avowed*, denial (as we shall show by-and-by) of the supernatural aspect of the Old Testament, of the Divine purpose bound up in it, manifested at sundry times and in divers manners, till the fulness of time.

Assuredly the English Higher Critics do not follow them in this irreverent treatment of Scripture, and this is a cause for much thankfulness; but let it be remembered that they fully accept what we have above called the “fundamental assumptions” of the Continental critics, which rest ultimately on the denial of what we have been accustomed to view as the Divine purpose of the Old Testament. In other words, they accept certain conclusions, and from these they start; but they shut their eyes to the beliefs,

or unbelief, without which those conclusions could hardly have been formulated.

Before we pass on to define our own position, we would once more urge our unhesitating belief that—however much the old-fashioned views will have to be changed in details—and they doubtless will have to be changed in many—the anxious soul may feel well assured that the fabric is not shaken. The spade of the archæologist has already overthrown a good many theories of the critic. The end is not yet.

There was once a weak and foolish King of Israel of whom one wise saying is recorded: "Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off." These words may well be used with regard to the neo-critics to-day. Let men be content to wait awhile and hold their judgment in abeyance till the new evidence now pouring in thick and fast has been sifted. Let it be remembered, too, that all disputants are not on the same plane of argument—a fact too often forgotten. We are told that it is unfair in this discussion to assume the Divine character of the Bible before starting. Yet not a few of the "Higher Critics" start, as it were, with the axiom that the Bible is in no more sense Divine than any other ancient book.

If by God's blessing we could be enabled, in however slight a degree, to reassure those distressed souls to whom their belief in God's Word is the very breath of their lives, and to give a truer estimate of the

controversy to some who have with too little reflection accepted the modern theories, it would be a matter for which we should feel humbly and heartily thankful.

We ventured to protest above against the too common way in which the defenders of the old beliefs were branded as mere obscurantists. From the tone taken in some books it might be supposed that they were people who had learnt nothing and forgotten nothing ; that in spite of all the advance and all the discoveries of recent years they still maintained, not merely the truth that the Bible is the Word of God, the very Divine Oracles, but also the absolute inerrancy of every minute historic detail and every date ; that, regardless of the existence of various readings, they proclaimed the most absolute *verbal* inspiration of the Bible.

In order, therefore, to make our position clear, it may be well to define with some fulness what we believe an intelligent conservative critic will hold as to the Old Testament. Since it is in the Pentateuch that the proposed changes are most revolutionary, we shall speak of that and of the other books of the Old Testament separately.

We at once, then, profess our belief that the Pentateuch is *substantially* Mosaic, and now proceed to say what we mean by "substantially." Moses was not a writer of history like a modern historian, say a University professor working in a study, well filled with books of reference, and with the fear of

the reviewers before his eyes. Whatever else he was, a Divinely-taught lawgiver, a man of genius such as the world has seldom seen, he was an Oriental, and it was as an Oriental that his idea of shaping his history was conceived.

For the history of the period before his own time, and going back to long past ages, he had documents which we are entitled to believe were the work of inspired men, though their very names are lost. *Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona multi*. Why should we suppose that God allowed so many centuries to roll over the world from Adam to Moses without guiding the mind and pen of man to record such things as should serve the Divine purpose throughout the ages?

One old stumbling-block has now been removed. Did the art of writing exist so anciently? For, if not, oral tradition is a frail thing to trust to. Happily, from the mounds of Babylonia, records have been disinterred from the sleep of millenniums which show us the literary activity of the ages before Abraham. Nor this alone. The wisdom of Egypt wherein Moses was learned was embodied in records of a very long series of centuries.

That Moses had and used documents no sane man doubts. No one would suppose that the knowledge of the details preserved in Genesis was *directly* imparted by the Holy Spirit, using Moses as a mere mechanical agent. On the other hand, the believer,

taking as a matter of course the use of documents, has a right to his own belief as to the date and value of the documents. Whence, then, could Moses possibly have got such ? The two main sources would clearly be Babylonia and Egypt. As regards the former, two obvious channels present themselves. When we bear in mind the literary activity there in times long before Abraham was born in Ur of the Chaldees, and also the intense religious spirit that prevailed there, misguided though it was, there is nothing absurd in the idea that Terah and Abraham brought with them, on their migration, tablets on which was inscribed the story of ancient days, the Creation, the Fall, the Flood, and the after record.

Let us remember, too, what the find at Tel-el-Amarna has taught us, that Palestine, a century before the Exodus, was permeated with Babylonian culture and used the Babylonian script, so that primitive Babylonian beliefs may have been rife in Palestine. To dwell at length on this would be to wander off from our main topic. It will suffice here to say that the Biblical and Chaldean accounts of the Creation and the Flood are, spite of all their differences, so closely allied that they clearly have an organic connection, and cannot conceivably present mere accidental coincidences.

We would simply avow our own belief that the Biblical account represents, in a pure form, a primal revelation, however reshaped and remodelled by holy

men raised up to do so. The Chaldean story is the account corrupted by human imaginings run wild. To suppose that the Biblical account is merely a modified form from the Chaldean seems to us inconceivable, as a mere matter of literary criticism, since we must develop the most rigid monotheism from a wild polytheism, and find the idea of God omnipotent where before a "rabble of gods" waged a precarious warfare against the powers of darkness.

For the patriarchal history there was doubtless a variety of documents, and the inspired editor was guided in his choice. Where did Gen. xiv. come from? Dr. Hommel suggests from the royal library of pre-Israelite Salem. Anyhow, experts are showing us that it bears every mark of being contemporaneous history, so that the late Dr. Kuenen's remark as to the chapter being a fragment of "a post-Exilic romance of the life of Abraham" may be nailed up as a specimen of what "critics" will commit themselves to.

Ancient records were doubtless among the cherished possessions of the children of Abraham, and we are reminded by Dr. Sayce that the Egyptian chapters of the story of Joseph were in their essence due to men who possessed a minute and exact knowledge of the Egypt of the day. To say more than this is beyond our purpose. We hold, and we have good warrant for holding, the existence of documents, largely contemporaneous, embodying history, not

myth, wherein the work of Moses was to select and blend aright, and where we may feel fully assured that guidance was not lacking to him.

He would use these documents not as a careful modern historian treats his authorities. When Lord Macaulay, for example, undertook his History of England, he read all the contemporaneous documents of his period on which he could lay his hands, and, this done, he recast his facts according to his own ideas. The ancient Oriental historian was constantly content to embody his materials wholesale. The older records, for example, of the Creation and the Flood were doubtless incorporated as they came into the hands of the sacred editor, with probably very little change. But beside what we have said would be the natural habit of the Oriental historian, it is quite conceivable that to the editor of Genesis the materials which came into his hands would possess a sacredness which would forbid him to recast them save under special conditions. Sometimes indeed two or more sources might be employed, when portions might have to be dovetailed together. The result of this might perhaps be apparent contradictions as to details, which might, however, conceivably be reconciled if we had a fuller knowledge of the whole range of the facts.

Let us consider next the history of the Mosaic age itself, and dwell for a moment on the wondrous preparation the great lawgiver had for his work.



Trained for forty years amid the priests and statesmen and warriors of the court of the Pharaoh, what form of the culture or the science which the world then knew would not be his? Trained amid the silence of the Midianite desert for forty years more, he received the strength which comes from solitude with God.

That the historic portions of Exodus and Numbers were substantially written by him is indeed denied, but the denial is the inevitable outcome of an hypothesis. Some portions may be due to subordinates acting under his authority, and to such a source we should naturally refer the mass of such details as the account of the structure of the Tabernacle or of the Levitical Code. That Moses himself was partly the direct author is expressly shown by Exod. xvii. 14, xxxiv. 27; but, however many passages may be due to his lieutenants, it suffices us if they are divinely appointed records of the Mosaic age.

Deuteronomy distinctly claims to be a statement made by Moses himself. Round the question of the date of this book a long-fought battle has circled, and many critics have no hesitation in saying that the book is a fabrication of the age of Josiah or thereabouts; yet, curiously enough, though it is a forgery, and therefore primarily resting on a deception, we are told it is none the less inspired.

If now it be asked how far have the books of Moses been modified since the Mosaic age, it is

clearly impossible to give any exact answer. Though the fivefold division is a natural one, it may or may not have been contemporaneous. Or, again, what Moses left behind him may have been a collection of separate pieces rather than a codified whole, and the present arrangement may have been the work of a subsequent editor. The arrangement, however, is a secondary point; it is the record itself which is the essential.

There is one point, indeed, on which we can speak with certainty. The Pentateuch has passed through the hands of editors, possibly a long series of them, who have had regard to the preservation of the text in its purity, and have added various explanatory glosses. If we believe at all that to the Providence of God we owe our Bible, then we may surely trust Him to have cared for its preservation in all that is essential for the needs of man. Deut. xxxiv. is necessarily a post-Mosaic addition, it would have been a very amazing thing if there had not been such an addition. That there are glosses in various passages is surely not to be wondered at, seeing through how many centuries the record was handed down; and, indeed, their presence is itself evidence of the antiquity of the record. (Consider, for example, the numerous glosses in Gen. xiv. 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 15, 17.)

We make no attempt here to define the nature and variety of the documents which underlie Genesis,

nor to estimate the amount to which editors, from Joshua, perhaps, to Ezra, have left their mark upon it; but we frankly allow the existence of these secondary influences. Yet, when all allowance is made, we still have the Pentateuch substantially and essentially Mosaic. Against this historic view the "higher critics" have brought forward a series of theories, of which we shall speak in due course. At this stage we shall content ourselves with citing Dr. Hommel's remark that "external evidence must be the banner under which all students of Old Testament literature are to range themselves in the future."

Before passing on to note a few points with respect to the later books of the Old Testament, there is just one thing more in relation to the Pentateuch on which we desire to say a word. It will be noticed that we have consistently stuck to the word Pentateuch, and have refrained from any use of the word Hexateuch—*i.e.* the Pentateuch with Joshua.

Let us say at once what we have sought to maintain elsewhere, that there is a fair and an unfair use of this word. So far as it is meant that we may associate Joshua with the Pentateuch, as its natural outcome, just as we may connect the Acts of the Apostles with the Third Gospel, well and good. This is, however, by no means the sense in which the word is used by many. It is implied that the six books once formed a distinct and integral whole,

and that it is merely a chance that the Book of Joshua, instead of having been detached from the volume, was not permanently combined with it. There is no objective evidence whatever for such a view ; and it seems to us that, had the Book of Joshua ever formed part of the great Code, it is inconceivable that the leaders of the nation would have ventured to detach it, or, indeed, why they should have done so.

We pass on now to call attention to a few points in connection with the later books of the Old Testament, and we have a special reason in doing so. Clearly with the increase in our knowledge, and as fresh discoveries crowd in to modify our old views, we must be prepared for certain restatements of the case, cautiously and reverently expressed. But there are different degrees of probability.

In some cases a minuter study has shown that the old belief in its old form is no longer tenable. In others a considerable amount of adverse evidence is adduced ; but, in view of the rebutting evidence, the case must be held to be "Not proven." Once again, there are cases where, objective evidence being absent or scanty, subjectivity is made to take its place. Our complaint is that too often the defensive evidence is ignored or minimised, and the true issue is made to appear in a false light.

We will now take an example or two of each of the above three cases. We are not arguing, it will

be remembered, about any of them ; we are simply using them as illustrations of what we complain of. The Book of Ecclesiastes has for many centuries been believed to have been the work of King Solomon. Yet it will readily be allowed by all competent Hebraists that the Hebrew in which the book is written cannot, *quâ* Hebrew, be such as King Solomon conceivably could have written. Whether, however, the book may be a recasting or a development of a Solomonian nucleus is another matter. When a recent writer says that the social condition pictured in the book is not such as suits with "the golden days" of Solomon, one would ask, What do we really know of the social condition of Israel in the days of Solomon? Probably the days were "golden" in the sense in which France found those of Louis XIV. so—a luxurious and oppressive court ; a down-trodden, discontented people.

Or take an example of a different kind. Is the book which we call Isaiah the work of one or two or several writers? We venture to think that, spite of all the evidence which has been brought forward in favour of a plurality of writers, the evidence which justifies us in seeing an Isaiah one and indivisible has never been overthrown. Or, again, what of Daniel: is it a history of the sixth, or a romance of the second, century B.C.? Here we will quote a very just remark of Dr. Robert Anderson, that the "critics" have done their very worst on

Daniel, and the archæological results so far established are steadily in favour of the historic character of the book. To any who would wish to read a statement, at once telling and just, of the evidence for the truth of Daniel, we would cordially recommend a perusal of Dr. Anderson's "Daniel in the Critics' Den." If he goes to it with an unbiassed mind, he will conclude that the "critical" view of Daniel is not quite the axiom we are sometimes told.

But we have yet a third class of cases, where subjectivity is made to do duty for argument. In our Psalter of a hundred and fifty Psalms seventy-three are definitely ascribed to David. Yet we readily allow that, in some of these cases, the title may have been erroneously attached; and where the evidence adducible from the Psalm itself is absolutely inconsistent with the heading, the heading must be surrendered. But we are not prepared to view the headings as immaterial, and decide that a Psalm is Davidic or non-Davidic *merely* on internal grounds. When the headings were attached we cannot say; but they certainly are ancient. They were ancient when the LXX. version of the Psalms was made, because the tradition of the meaning of so many had completely died out, and meaningless blunders introduced. Yet a recent distinguished Bampton Lecturer, having reduced the Davidic element in the Psalms to Psalm xviii., ultimately rejected even that. In a word, the headings are an

important part of the evidence, by no means infallible, but not to be cast aside as mere irrelevancies. A tradition going back several centuries before Christ—how many we cannot say—is a factor that should be scientifically dealt with.

Or take one more case. If the Book of Chronicles is real, genuine history, and not a priestly fabrication where facts were subordinated to the cause which the writer had at heart, then Professor Wellhausen's scheme will want rewriting. It is therefore a maxim of the "higher critic" that Chronicles is not true history. "With what show of justice," says Wellhausen (*Proleg.* p. 224, Eng. trans.), "after his statements have over and over again been shown to be incredible, can he be held at discretion to be an unimpeachable narrator?" But there has been too much reasoning in a circle in all this. First, by a literary dissection obtain an apparent substructure. On this build up as elaborate a superstructure as you please. Anything, then, which old-fashioned people call facts, but which conflict with these conclusions, may be freely dismissed by the "critic." The Chronicler constantly refers to documents as his authorities, but these no longer exist, and the idea that the Chronicler ever had any tradition handed on from pre-Exilic times "is manifestly out of the question" (*ib.* 222). All these are merely our Book of Kings. If this view were taken, then the historic statements of Chronicles which are not also

found in Kings would simply be an "apocryphal amplification." Now it is true that there is an almost total absence of external evidence, and therefore on the whole the issue is between the grounds on which we believe that the Chronicles are part of the Oracles with which the Jews were entrusted, and the theory which rejects them as fabrication.

Yet external evidence sheds a very suggestive light on one point mentioned by the Chronicler, which is not in the Book of Kings at all. In 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11 we are told that Manasseh was taken in fetters to Babylon, whence he was subsequently released. Yet why did not the King of Assyria take him to his proper capital of Nineveh ? The inscriptions have clearly shown how Esar-haddon, reversing the policy of his father Sennacherib, was King of Babylonia as well as of Assyria, and had rebuilt Babylon, and probably resided there from time to time. Esar-haddon's son and successor, Assur-bani-pal, after quelling a Babylonian revolt, also, it would seem, visited Babylon in person. Thus Babylon would be the most natural place for a rebellious Jewish king, evidently one of the Palestino-Phœnician confederates of the rebel King of Babylon, to have been brought to meet his suzerain. Again, it has been asked, When did an Assyrian king ever restore to his liberty a vassal who had been convicted of rebellion ? To this it can be answered that the inscriptions furnish several



instances exactly parallel to the release of Manasseh (see Sayce, "Higher Criticism and the Monuments," p. 458; Schrader, "Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament," ii. 53 *f.*, Eng. trans.).

Thus in almost the only instance where the Chronicler can be tested by undoubted external evidence he stands the test successfully. The case, therefore, against the Chronicles may be roughly summed up:—If the historic truth of Chronicles be allowed, the neo-critical theories must be fundamentally altered. The reader therefore can choose between them.

We wish to point out that in some cases we are faced with a considerable body of evidence which has to be reckoned with, leading to the conclusion that certain current views of date and the like must be modified; in others the evidence is conflicting, and perhaps the prepossessions of a student one way or other may colour his view as to the present outcome of the conflict; in others yet again argument is too much replaced by assertion, and any deficiency in the former has to be made up, as when Brennus threw his sword into the scale. In other words, statements backed by very different amounts of evidence are held before us as the conclusions of the "critics," where yet the cautious student will wish to differentiate, especially if there is a chance of fresh discoveries putting a new light on matters.

But we have a further point which seems to us

to give grave matter for thought. Such works as Wellhausen's *Prolegomena* and Professor Driver's "Introduction" are books written by specialists, and appealing almost entirely to students working in the special line. They are not books appealing to the ordinary general reader. But of late there have sprung up a number of books bringing before the multitude the so-called "results" of the "higher critics," flinging broadcast before a body of half-educated readers various theories, from the reasonably probable to the merely possible, with no attempt at differentiation, if indeed their readers were capable of appreciating such attempts. Nay, some books are put out whose authors have clearly not one iota of original knowledge to justify them in posing as teachers. In a work we have recently seen, the writer, who talks breezily of Darius Hystaspes (*sic*) and Gregory of Nazianzen (*sic*), and appears unconscious of any Ahasuerus save the Xerxes pictured by Herodotus, lays down the law as to various books of the Old Testament with an offhandedness worthy of Wellhausen himself.

It is clear that patience and caution and reverence must be the watchwords of the Christian scholar. He will not shut his ears to argument as to any point in the structure of the Old Testament, but he will refuse to be led away by assertion or the parrot-cry, "All critics are agreed." Doubtless a wise general in command of a fortress will at once with-

draw his forces from outposts when they are clearly untenable, but he will carefully satisfy himself that they are absolutely untenable before he acts.

Before we leave this part of our subject, there is just one more point to which we would advert. A mass of new evidence is being brought into the field by the archæologists, which must materially alter the conditions of the conflict. In any case we have a right to insist that a false issue shall not be raised. What have the archæologists done? The "higher critics'" answer to this may be roughly expressed in the words of a recent book on the "Higher Criticism of the Hexateuch": "Archæologists have made no discovery which confirms the tradition that Moses wrote the Pentateuch." In one sense, this is of course a mere truism. Does the writer suppose archæologists are hoping to find clay tablets containing references to Moses' literary work? But there is another sense in which these words may be viewed as an unfair *ignoratio elenchi*. What the archæologists have pre-eminently done, quite apart from any difficulties they have cleared up or doubts which they have resolved, is this: they have shown that the *background* of the older Bible story is historical and not mythical. Let us then consider how much hinges on this. Let us suppose that a scholar, deeply versed in the social and political state of England in the latter half of the twelfth century, should carefully examine the historic back-

ground of "Ivanhoe." Scott was a man of an exceptional amount of reading, yet, we are convinced, our specialist would find many a slip. Yet conversely, learned Egyptologists like Professor Sayce tell us unhesitatingly that (for example) the Egyptian background to the story of Joseph bears the most searching scrutiny. But in proportion to the correspondence of the story with the conditions of the age, the greater the improbability that the story can be assigned to a date long subsequent to the events.

We come back now to the point we started from. We have explained what we mean by saying that we held the Pentateuch to be *substantially* Mosaic; and as regards the other books of the Old Testament, we maintained that it was not new views to which we objected, but that these were too often pressed upon us on what seemed to many of us insufficient evidence; indeed, the loudness of the assertions does not always vary directly with the weight of the evidence.

But, indeed, the question of authorship is in most cases not the fundamental one. While we have professed our own belief in the *substantial* Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, there is a graver question underlying all this, that of the historic credibility of the Pentateuch. If a large part of that work was written a thousand years after the death of Moses, partly from vague traditions, partly

from sheer fabrications, manifestly its historic worth is little enough. Yet while a book can be honest history which is in no sense Divine, still if the modern view of the formation and date of the Pentateuch be correct, we confess we are unable to see how its Divine character can be maintained. Is the God who cannot lie supposed to be the patron of a record put forth by those who claim His authority for a fabrication?

Let us cling to the belief that in the Old Testament we have a priceless jewel, even though it is contained in an earthen vessel. Such allowances because of the latter as are consistent with holding unwaveringly to the former, we readily admit. God has chosen human agents to commit to writing and to transmit to age after age His Holy Word. To what extent authors or copyists have been allowed to drift into error we cannot say. Anyhow, we believe that they have been so guarded that nothing in any way essential to the Faith has been allowed to be wrongly put; that in fact the teaching of the Old Testament as we now have it is as all-availing for its purpose as if we had the *ipsissima verba* of lawgiver or prophet.

Yet there may be errors of detail due to the author. Numerals may from some cause have been wrongly given, sometimes there may have been an error of detail in the "sources," sometimes the ultimate author may have misinterpreted this or

that point. Copyists, again, are not always absolutely accurate. Yet how little do such admissions as these touch the case. An error in a numeral, a confusion of some detail, small variations in two forms of a story—how little do these affect the value of a record.

Is Genesis honest history? We waive for the present any question as to whether it is also Divine. Is it honest history? Does it tell of persons who actually lived thousands of years ago? Is the background true to the facts of the dates? Or is it a fabrication of long after ages? What bearing such a dispute must have on our view of the New Testament we must consider by-and-by.

A little, but perhaps not very much, may yet be gleaned in the various books of the Old Testament by a fuller examination of Hebrew MSS., and still more of ancient versions; a vast deal will almost certainly be derived from the further researches of archæologists. How far these will strengthen the "critical" conclusions, and how far they will be found to support traditional beliefs, while doubtless modifying various details, is a question the answer to which is hardly doubtful, considering what the last few years have taught us.

## CHAPTER II

### VARIOUS THEORIES OF "HIGHER CRITICISM"

ANY one, whether Hebrew scholar or not (for this is a matter in which shrewd common sense has a more direct function than scholarship), who wishes to form an independent judgment on the question of the Higher Criticism, should by all means examine the history of its development; though, as we shall seek to show subsequently, "development" is by no means the word to apply to the Protean changes it has undergone.

Of course the belief that Moses made use of documents for the pre-Mosaic period of history stands on quite another footing from the views which, having disintegrated Genesis into its supposed "sources," first proceed to challenge and then to deny the traditional Mosaic authorship of Genesis, and ultimately to apply their solvent, not merely to the pre-Mosaic story contained in Genesis and the early chapters of Exodus, where in some sort Moses *must* have had external help, absolutely direct inspiration, oral tradition, or documents; but also to the rest of the Pentateuch, where if the historic truth be allowed,

even while its inspiration is denied, he might have worked without such aid.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century Vitranga, while maintaining fully the Mosaic authorship of Genesis, yet held that Moses made the fullest use of earlier documents, records preserved among the Israelites, which he digested into shape. So, in some form or other, do the most conservative scholars now; though they may differ as to the amount to which extracts are inserted bodily, pieced in as it were, and are not merely drawn upon for their facts.

Doubts as to how far Moses was the author of Genesis were expressed long ago by such men as Aben Ezra, the famous Rabbi of Toledo, or Hobbes of Malmesbury, the author of "Leviathan," or the philosophic Jew Spinoza; but the views of these and others may be dismissed now as merely put forth incidentally. The first systematic literary attempt to get behind the existing Book of Genesis was the work of a distinguished French physician, Jean Astruc, in the middle of the last century. His book, published anonymously at Brussels in 1753, is entitled "Conjectures as to the Original Memoirs of which it appears that Moses made use to compose the Book of Genesis." Let it be noticed at once that the attempt is modestly called "Conjectures," and that the essentially Mosaic character of Genesis is unchallenged.



The scheme rests on the alternate use of the Divine names *Elohim* and *Jehovah*, and accordingly we have given us, in two parallel columns, A and B, the Elohistie and Jehovistic documents. Besides these there are ten other portions, which can, however, be conveniently grouped into two sets: (1) passages, such as certain portions of the Flood story, where even triplicates seem to appear, and where the absence of any Divine name forbade to attach them to either main division; and (2) passages dealing with facts not directly connected with Israelite history, such as cc. xiv., xxxvi. These two sets Astruc groups as C and D respectively.

He supposes further that Moses arranged his materials in four separate columns, which he compares to Origen's "Tetrapla," and that certain chronological irregularities in Genesis are not due to Moses, but to the negligence of transcribers, who had run the four columns into one continuous text.

This was the beginning. The foundation of the argument, it will be remembered, was simply the alternation of the two Divine names, and was said to result in four advantages—that it removes the singularity of the varying of the names if supposed to emanate directly from one author, it explains most of the duplications as due to different authors, it gets rid of alleged anachronisms, and it exculpates Moses from the charge of errors. It was obvious, however, that the underlying principle of Astruc's

scheme was insufficient, if only on the ground that we cannot tell what amount of editorial change may have been introduced into the use of the Divine names. The further development came from Germany. Astruc's original scheme was elaborated by J. G. Eichhorn, Professor at Jena, and afterwards at Göttingen, by means of a careful analysis of diction and style. The first edition of Eichhorn's "Introduction to the Old Testament" appeared in 1783, and the fourth in 1823. The views he set forth won a rapid popularity, and were broadly accepted, but with variations in many points, by a large number of German scholars.

We are anxious to avoid needless details, and confine ourselves to Eichhorn himself. His views underwent modifications in his various editions. At first he admitted the reasonableness of viewing Moses as the author and compiler of the Pentateuch; but according to the view set forth in the fourth and final edition, we must believe that the earlier history is, on the whole, a blend of two main sources, Elohist and Jehovistic, the former running on to the mission of Moses, the latter to about the death of Joseph. Besides these, certain other ancient documents (*e.g.* Gen. ii. 4–iii., xxiv. &c.) were let in. The remainder of the Pentateuch is an outcome of writings of Moses or of the Mosaic age, the actual redactor being unknown.

Such, then, is the Document theory (*Urkunden-*

*Hypothese*). It is obvious, however, that the publication of such a theory would tempt many scholars to develop it in various ways. An extreme section, no longer content with two main "sources" for the whole period, now proceeded to break up the Pentateuch into a large number of fragments of various lengths, representing all that the compiler could find relevant to his purpose, it being impossible to know anything of the work from which they were taken, save what actually has been preserved, or to argue with any certainty which of the existing fragments may be taken from the same work. One of the leading representatives of this view was J. S. Vater, who, in his "Commentary on the Pentateuch" (1802-5), reduces Genesis to thirty-eight fragments of various lengths, and treats the other four books in similar style. This theory has well been styled "the Document theory run mad." It is not necessary to enter into any discussion of it; it was long ago refuted and cast aside by the "critics," who were themselves in turn to be the victims of their successors, *velut unda supervenit undam*. The essential fallacy of such a theory is at once seen, if we are content to deal with a plain fact and not a mass of subjective fancies.

Let us suppose that some man has tried to get together from all sources open to him all facts bearing upon some period of history which appeals to him, whether contemporaneous or otherwise. From every

book or magazine or newspaper or written document which comes to his hand, he picks out everything which refers to the special subject, and fits them together in a continuous form as best he can. Surely such a mass of heterogeneous fragments could only result in a plainly heterogeneous whole. There could be no definite plan, no unity of purpose, no consistent harmony, in such a record.

Yet in Genesis, whether we call it a book given us from God or not, the unity of purpose is unmistakable, the orderly, well-arranged scheme is obvious to all who will see it, and the purpose of the author is emphasised again and again by repeated allusions throughout the story to earlier events; and indeed often, when there are no allusions, we must presuppose the earlier events if the record is to be intelligible.

Let the curtain now fall on the "Document theory" and rise upon a new scene, that of the "Supplement theory" (*Ergänzung-Hypothese*). The pendulum had swung very far in the "Fragment theory" phase of the former, and the "Supplement theory" marks a distinct reaction, recognising, so far as it goes, the unity which animates the Pentateuch. This is the view which in various forms, with numerous differences of details, was maintained by F. Tuch (1838), J. J. Stähelin (1843), De Wette (1845), Bleek (1860), and others.

In this theory it is no longer held that documents by different authors are pieced together by a redactor,

but that a single ancient work, that of the Elohist (E), is taken by a later writer, the Jehovist (J), as the basis for a new and enlarged edition. This original record (the *Grundschrift*, as it was the fashion to call it) was amplified by sections added by the Jehovist, derived from such materials as were within his reach. He supplied omissions, he amplified where the story seemed to need it; and thus, as we have said, he may be considered to have set forth a new and enlarged edition. It should be added that, besides the Elohist record, the Jehovistic editor possessed a second "source," the Book of Deuteronomy, though Stähelin believed that the Jehovist was the author of Deuteronomy.

At the first blush of the thing there seemed to be one very great gain. The Pentateuch was no longer a mere *omnium gatherum*, a sort of *olla podrida*, but, as regards a large portion of it, a living organic whole. It was further believed that this original story could be detached from the editorial additions by carefully analysing the details of style and diction and theological standpoint. We are further able to account for what on the Document theory was an awkward puzzle, not merely the references in passages of the Elohist record to one another, or in passages of the Jehovistic record to one another—that was simple enough—but also the cases where Jehovistic sections refer to or presuppose passages of the Elohist story. Obviously, the editor of the work

might naturally refer to any passages of the work he was editing and amplifying.

So far, so good. The references of J to E are perfectly natural and call for no further remark. But what of the references in E to J? How can the earlier show knowledge of and refer to the later? And what of cases where phrases and ideas declared to be characteristic of J are found in E? The plain man will naturally say that the theory breaks down. The then critics, however, rose to the occasion. The cause was a simple one. The Jehovistic writer had simply touched up the Elohistie passages, had adapted their style and language to his own, and inserted phrases which were specially characteristic of himself. But, conversely, in passages declared to be undoubtedly Jehovistic were found traces of style and diction and thought of the Elohistie writer. These are declared to be simply instances of conscious imitation on the part of the Jehovist of the characteristics of his Elohistie predecessor, in these cases aiming at making the supplementary portions as similar as possible to the work they are supplementing—a matter he has not in the least troubled himself about elsewhere.

Look at the matter again from a somewhat different point of view. We are told that, as a rule, the line dividing an Elohistie passage from a Jehovistic one is quite plainly to be seen, the two styles being characteristic and distinct. Yet at times

it would seem that the line of division is by no means clear, and perhaps it may be even impossible to disintegrate a portion of the text into its two constituents. Is not this a rather awkward inconsistency? By no means. The Jehovistic writer was simply with consummate art obliterating the marks of junction, determining that the work should seem a homogeneous production, and that his additions should be indissolubly blent with the earlier work. Strange that he should only act in this way occasionally, and not at all times. Thus he sometimes tries to colour Elohistie sections with his own phraseology, but only sometimes. He sometimes himself imitates the Elohistie style and ideas, but only sometimes. He sometimes seeks carefully to cover over the lines of division between his own passages and those of the Elohist, but only sometimes. He surely must have been an extraordinary person.

He is well described by Dr. W. H. Green: "A hypothetical personage, who has to be represented by turns as artless and artful, as an honest reporter and a designing interpolator, as skilful and a bungler, as greatly concerned about a conformity of style and thought in some passages, of which he is wholly regardless in others, and of whose existence we have no other evidence than that afforded by these contradictory allegations respecting him, can scarcely be said to have his reality established thus" ("The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch," p. 80).

The critics of this school are by no means at one as to the date of the two writers. The Elohist has been placed by some as early as the period of the Judges, and by others in the time of Saul. This is the view of Bleek, who maintains that it cannot be placed later, not even in the reign of Solomon, because of the form in which the history of the Patriarchs is set forth in Genesis. The Jehovist of course was later, but, according to Bleek, lived anyhow before the Disruption, and perhaps in the earlier part of the reign of David. Tuch places him somewhat later, perhaps in the reign of Solomon. It seems pretty clear that if these scholars were alive now they would be branded as not much better than "mere traditionalists." Bleek indeed believed that there was a large element in the Pentateuch genuinely Mosaic, for "an important part of the laws and ordinances is of such a nature that, judging from their purport and form, it is impossible that they could belong to any other age than the Mosaic," and "the written records of these commands we may ascribe, if not to Moses himself, at least to the Mosaic age."

A reaction from the "Supplement Hypothesis," provoked by the curious complications to which we have referred, in due course set in, and the result showed itself in the works of various scholars, differing not inconsiderably one from another, but all alike seeking to cope with the difficulties which



the foregoing theory was clearly inadequate to solve.

We shall speak briefly here of two theories, those of Ewald and Hupfeld, the former demanding our notice from the exceptional brilliancy of the writer, and the bold originality of his views; but as will be seen, it is not a direct precursor of the dominant theories of the present day.

Ewald's earliest work had embodied an attack on the "Fragment Hypothesis," and, writing twenty years after, he remarks: "I do not now regret having cast my first youthful work of the year 1823 into the wild ferment of the early investigations," adding that he still "maintains large and important parts of it." His ultimate scheme is described at great length in the first volume of his famous work, the "History of the People of Israel." He supposes that there exist fragments of very ancient narrative embedded in the Hexateuch, which, however, can be distinguished from the surrounding matter by the keen eyes of a critic. Certainly, while for brilliancy of intuition, and for vividness in the setting forth of his views, Ewald cannot be said to have any equals among the critics of the present day, so also for arbitrary and dogmatic rulings as to his views—his decisions, we might almost say—he stands well-nigh alone.

One of the earliest of the historical narratives was doubtless the "Book of the Wars of the Lord," which

is once cited in Num. xxi. 14, and from which are probably taken Josh. xvii. 14-18 and the Song of Miriam, and perhaps also a list of the encampments in the wilderness. Another was a "Biography of Moses" (but "all that we can confidently assign to this" are Exod. iv. 18, xviii.), and a third, the "Book of the Covenants," compacts both between God and man (as Exod. xxiv.) and between man and man (as in Gen. xxi., xxvi., xxxi.). The date of the "Book of the Covenants" is, we are told, probably the second half of the period of the Judges.

The second main element was what Ewald called the "Book of the Origins," which as a completed work is referred to the first third of Solomon's reign. This book was an historical survey, looking back to the Creation, and taking Israel as the centre of all nations and as the final purpose of history. The author is assumed to be a priest, anxious that no improper sacrifices or improper (*i.e.* non-Aaronitic) priests should be found in the Mosaic sanctuary. But the priestly author is no mere ecclesiastic with a narrow professional horizon: "Far higher than the priest stands in his estimation the wise legislator and true leader of the people."

We have been so accustomed of late to be told, as though it were an axiom, that much of Genesis and of the other books of the Hexateuch was written by a priestly author, whose work even so sober a critic as Dillmann can speak of as "juristically pre-

cise and formal, its language somewhat stiff and monotonous," that it comes with a strange shock of surprise to find Ewald, a critic bound less than most by trammels of traditionalism, bursting forth in positive enthusiasm as he apostrophises the unknown priestly author, addressing him as "lofty spirit." Ewald speaks of the "perfection and beauty," of the "lucidity and quiet transparency," of the style "removed . . . from the cold tranquillity and studied description that became usual in later times." He tells us that the work breathes "a peculiar fresh poetic air," and that from "its florid style of description [it] belongs to the finest period of Hebrew literature and national life." Let us specially call attention to the following sentence: "Its language at least shows itself such [*i.e.* as spoken of in our immediately preceding citation], wherever its fragments are preserved unaltered; and the very first passage, Gen. i.-ii. 4, may serve as a clear specimen of all subsequent ones."

The dominant view nowadays is that the wondrous Epic of Creation is part of the fabrication by priests, in the Babylonian Exile, in pursuance of a definite scheme of policy. A reader can to a certain extent apply a test for himself. What Ewald says is, we feel, pre-eminently true for the Hebrew text, but the characteristics are only diluted, not destroyed, in a translation. Let an English reader, with his English Bible in his hand, dismiss for the moment any old-

fashioned beliefs he may happen to have, as well as any bias from recent critical works, and, after reading Gen. i.-ii. 4, ask himself, as a matter of simple literary criticism, if the language seems "juristically precise and formal, stiff and monotonous," or is picturesque, graceful, "instinct with bright poetic charm." Of course the matter is one of much more than literary history, but it will readily be seen that the questions of style and of date are very vitally connected.

Later than the "Book of the Origins" come the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Narrators, all "prophetic" (as opposed to priestly), each of whom added his portion, and the last of whom worked up the whole into one record. Later than these was the author of Deuteronomy, which was at first a separate work written in Egypt in the latter part of the reign of Manasseh, but subsequently incorporated as an integral part of the Hexateuch.

Here, then, we must leave Ewald. In spite of his noble words about the "Book of Origins," words which we are most thankful to read, a tribute to the character of much of the record from one who claimed for himself an absolutely free hand—in spite of this, the Hexateuch as a whole, as pictured by Ewald, is simply a heterogeneous conglomerate, and from the very nature of the case destitute of any true unity of purpose.

There is one point which it is fair to add here.

Ewald had satisfied himself, on the evidence available to him, that the art of writing was not known to the patriarchal age. Thus a period of many centuries was embodied simply in oral tradition. Yet when Ewald wrote the first volume of the "History of Israel," between fifty and sixty years ago, the archæological evidence, the whole evidence practically outside the actual text of the Bible, was scanty enough. What Ewald could say in 1843, the same Ewald, were he alive now in 1899, could not possibly say.

The explorations in Chaldæa have shown that the art of writing, not merely in governmental records, but in all the relations of everyday life, was familiarly known in the cities of Babylonia, including Ur of the Chaldees itself, many generations before the time of Abraham. Thus we can well believe that tablets in cuneiform script, embodying the most cherished traditions of his race, accompanied Abraham from Ur to Haran, and from Haran to Canaan.

Once again, the discovery at Tel-el-Amarna, added to what we know of the invasion of the West land, centuries before the time of Abraham, by Sargon I., makes it plain that Chaldæan culture in its widest sense was dominant in Palestine in the pre-Mosaic age.

Professor Sayce has shown again and again how much the assumed ignorance of the art of writing has been the pivot on which much of the assumption

of the late date of the patriarchal history has hinged. Now that we see beyond all doubt that the art of writing was known and abundantly practised in very early ages, we might feel quite sure that a people, so strongly imbued with the religious instinct as the Chaldæans, would possess and cherish written records embodying their beliefs. "We might feel sure," we say; of the actual written records other than the Bible we must speak at some length presently. The reaction from the "Supplement Hypothesis" took a different turn in the case of Hupfeld. This scholar published in 1853 a work in which quite a new departure was taken. Instead of assuming the existence of two writers, the earlier Elohist author, who was supplemented by a Jehovistic editor, we are now bidden to assume three "sources," an Elohist and a Jehovist (the meaning of which names we have already explained), and also a second Elohist, who, while sharing the preference of the first Elohist for the name *Elohim* for God, seemed more nearly allied in style to the Jehovist. There were, in fact, three independent writings, which subsequently an editor, who allowed himself the fullest editorial privileges, worked up into a continuous whole; the Book of Deuteronomy, which was viewed as a quite independent work, being also incorporated.

A modification of this scheme was adopted by some critics, according to which there were not three "sources," which we may indicate as E<sup>1</sup>, J, E<sup>2</sup>,

but two, the Jehovist having incorporated with his history portions of that of the second Elohist, this composite work being subsequently blended with the work of the first Elohist. Whether, however, there was one blend of the three "sources," or whether a double process had to be performed, is not a very serious matter. The first Elohist was commonly assigned to the reign of David, and the Jehovist to about the time of Uzziah, the second Elohist, from whom the Jehovist perhaps borrowed, being a writer who lived shortly after the Disruption. The Book of Deuteronomy was declared to have been written not so very long before its supposed discovery in the reign of Josiah. Moreover, by some critics of this school the author of Deuteronomy has been identified with the Redactor.

It is claimed for the theory we are now considering that we have not to do with mere portions with which an editor filled in supposed gaps in the record before him, but that they were taken from a separate document which once existed independently. Yet the theorists were put to considerable straits in trying to establish the idea. It could only be done by taking various clauses out of the Elohistic portion, and by the help of these seeking to bridge over places where there seems to be a discontinuity.

Further, the idea of the two Elohistes was a very leading point. It was the attempt to get rid of a very obvious difficulty. There were passages which

seemed to differ in character from both the Elohist and Jehovistic sections, or rather blended the characteristics of both. The writer indeed used the name *Elohim*, but in some ways resembled the Jehovist. What simpler than to create a *second* Elohist? A further point of difficulty had been that there were undoubted references from one set of passages to the other, and that, be it remembered, both from J to E, and from E to J. But this is a trifle. The critics who strain at such a gnat as a slight difference of wording or construction in two sections of a book cheerfully swallow the camel of a series of such coincidences. It is simply the Redactor. What a boon the Redactor is! Is there any awkward passage which militates against a theory? It is simply due to the meddling of the Redactor. Once allow a Redactor with a free hand, and any evidence which is objected to is at once got rid of.

It is not part of our plan to enter upon any discussion of any of these theories—our aim is descriptive rather than argumentative, but we add a very brief *résumé* of the points urged against Hupfeld's scheme by Dr. W. H. Green. Let it be observed how, with the creation of the second Elohist, all idea of completeness in the first Elohist is gone. The first portion ordinarily assigned to the former (E<sup>2</sup>) is Gen. xx. (though some critics see fragments of his work in cc. xv., xviii.). Everything Elohist before that is assigned to E<sup>1</sup>; everything Elohist



after it to E<sup>2</sup>, with the exception of a number of disconnected scraps, Gen. xxiii. being the only portion of any length. Thus mere scraps are given which could not have existed independently, yet they constantly imply much which is assigned to the other documents. It is surely suspicious that, while up to ch. xx. we should have a compound of E<sup>1</sup> and J, yet after ch. xx. we have a compound of J and E<sup>2</sup>, with slight gleams of E<sup>1</sup>. Well does Dr. Green remark, "This looks more like the severance of what was once continuous than the disentanglement of documents once separate."

Again, while the first Elohist and the Jehovist appear to come apart very readily, the Jehovist and the second Elohist seem so intimately blended that it is very hard to dis sever them. Certainly there is but little in matter of diction or style which should compel us to assume that we have two distinct writers.

One point which may well be urged in reference to any alleged difference of diction between the two Elohist is this. We are told that in Gen. i.—xix. the diction of the Elohist is clearly distinguishable from that of the Jehovist, while in the remaining chapters the diction of the Jehovist is by no means easy to distinguish from that of the second Elohist. This in itself might seem to be of some weight, were it not for the widely differing character of the topics treated of by the two writers. The first Elohist tells

us of the Creation and the Flood, and also gives us genealogies and the like. The second Elohist tells us stories of everyday life. Is it to be wondered at that the diction should not be quite the same?

Dr. Green protests roundly, and no wonder, at the *carte-blanche* given to the Redactor. We spoke above of the capriciousness of the Jehovistic editor in the "Supplement Theory," but we have gone far beyond him now. Sometimes he scrupulously reproduces his "sources," even when this produces obvious repetitions; sometimes he leaves out large portions of his document, retaining a mere fragment which we should hardly have thought he would have cared to preserve; sometimes he harmonises his sources; sometimes he makes them look like accounts of independent events; sometimes he simply embodies a "source"; sometimes he touches it up as well. He is a most convenient person; yet his creation is a piece of the purest subjectivity, an idea which in any other literature than the Bible would be laughed out of court as an absurd joke, and, to view the matter on graver grounds, a strange monstrosity to those who believe in a Divine shaping of the Scriptures through the ages.

In dealing with the next phase of "Higher Criticism," which is that now dominant, we shall try to bring before our readers in some detail the nature of the disintegration which is proposed. If an intelligent reader, however ignorant of Hebrew, will try to

treat the matter as one in which common sense may be allowed fair play, and will not consent to be put to silence, simply at the mandate of the "critic," he will, we think, conclude that there are some reasons for suspending judgment. That scholarship is a highly important factor, it would be folly to deny; but it has been far too sweepingly asserted that scholarship is everything. Doubtless the learned man can teach the unlearned man a thousand things about the Bible; but when the learned man says, This or that verse is a mere gloss, This passage is simply a duplicate of another, That passage is simply a fragment of a romance of late date—he to whom the Bible is dear may well answer, Though you can read Hebrew and I cannot, I refuse to cut out portions of my Bible merely on your assertion, I demand proofs that a plain man can understand. I cannot reconcile it with my idea of God's Providence to suppose that in such a matter He would leave His people at the mercy of a body of critics, the more so when I remember that some of the most famous among the critics have refused to allow to the Old Testament any Divine character at all.

The new phase of criticism has borrowed largely from the school of which we have been speaking, while at the same time it has largely revolutionised them.

As we have seen, Ewald maintained that the phenomena of the Pentateuch were not to be ex-

plained by assuming the existence of an editor, who did the work once for all, but by a series of operations, layer after layer, thus justifying the name by which his scheme is sometimes called, the Crystallisation Hypothesis.

Hupfeld, it will be remembered, introduced two leading differences on the scheme of his predecessors: he viewed the Jehovistic author as the producer of a continuous story, not merely of isolated pieces dovetailed in; and, secondly, it is to him we owe the idea of two Elohistes instead of one.

Both Ewald and Hupfeld were, by the main ideas of their several schemes, largely to influence their successors, with whom the animating principle was a supposed law of development, first traced in connection with the legal parts of the Pentateuch.

Before going any further, therefore, it will be well to state that, apart from any views they might hold as to the relative dates, scholars had held the existence of three codes in the Pentateuch. Indeed, in one sense this is not a matter of opinion, but a matter of fact; only let men be careful how they explain the fact.

We have, first of all, the Code contained in Exod. xx.-xxiii., of which the Bible itself speaks as "The Book of the Covenant" (xxiv. 7). This, according to the Bible story, was delivered by Moses to the people at Sinai in the first year of the wanderings,

and is introduced by the words, "And God spake all these words, saying."

Secondly, we have the laws contained in Leviticus, together with those in the later chapters of Exodus, and in some of those of Numbers. In the case of most of these we are not definitely told when they were enacted, but we have the constant heading "The LORD spake unto Moses."

Thirdly, we have the addresses given by Moses to the people in the plains of Moab, at the end of the wanderings, shortly before his death, which are to be found in the volume we know as Deuteronomy.

According to the theory of development, of which we shall have something to say, it was urged that, instead of having laws, the dates of the promulgation of which did not differ by more than forty years, we had three distinct codes, widely separated in time, representing totally different religious standpoints, and indeed in many things absolutely contradictory.

We do not propose to enter into any discussion on these matters here; we shall merely give examples to show what is meant. Take first the question of Sanctuary. We are told that in the Book of the Covenant no special Sanctuary is enjoined; but to the other two there is but one Sanctuary, the Deuteronomic Code definitely ruling it, the Levitical Code taking it for granted; so that,

it is maintained, the change is coeval with the issue of Deuteronomy.

Although, as we have said, any discussion on this question is outside our present purpose, we cannot refrain from quoting a few words from a recent work: "Unfortunately these distinctions, definite in appearance, vanish in actual fact. The little code, called the 'Book of the Covenant' (Exod. xxi.-xxiii.) has expressly in view the single sanctuary at Jerusalem in its regulations as to the threefold annual pilgrimage [here is cited Exod. xxiii. 14-19]. The unity of the Sanctuary, the centralisation of the worship, are not less formally enjoined here than in the texts of Deuteronomy and Leviticus. Here we have the three social conditions coming to nothing with the three historic epochs of which they should preserve the remembrance."

These words are not, as might be supposed, those of some fossilised adherent of the old-fashioned view, who is still content to believe in the historic credibility of the Old Testament as he has inherited it; they are the words of M. Maurice Vernes (*Une Nouvelle Hypothèse sur la composition et l'origine du Deutéronome*, p. 46: Paris, 1887), who represents the school of thought which, while carrying its "critical" results far beyond those of Wellhausen and his English disciples, has yet rebelled against the artificial notion of the multiplicity of codes, and has seen that, be the date what it may, the unity is essential and un-

doubted. We shall speak of M. Vernes's theory at length in due course.

In the second place, it is said that there is a total change of the view taken of sacrifice. In the Book of the Covenant no special regulations are given *defining* the sacrifices; while the Deuteronomic Code, though it does specify various kinds of offerings, still does not give rules as to amount and the like, and the offerings are eaten before the Lord as a festal rite; on the other hand, in the Levitical Code we have an elaborate scheme of sacrifices tabulated, defined in fullest detail, with sacrifices into which the festal element does not enter at all. We will just pause here for a moment to observe that for those who believe that Deuteronomy is the "people's book," these differences are perfectly natural. An address nowadays to a general body of the laity, of both sexes, of various ages, dwelling on the main outlines of their duties as Christians and Churchmen, might well take a different turn from lectures to clergymen on their strictly professional duties as defined by the rubrics.

Or take yet a third point. What of the priesthood? In the Book of the Covenant there is no *specific* reference to a priesthood at all; the Book of Deuteronomy systematically uses the phrase "the priest the Levites" without differentiating two orders, showing, we are told, that all Levites were priests; while the Levitical Code confines the priesthood to

the sons of Aaron. We again suggest in passing that one addressing a body of clergy nowadays might find it very needful to lay stress on the duties attaching to the different orders, but to a general gathering of the laity the idea of the clergy as a whole is natural and obvious.

Of course if it be once fully allowed that there is a clear law of development to be seen here, if the three codes are really centuries apart, then a good many of our old-fashioned views would come down with a run.

On this point we wish strongly to urge those of our readers, who have not already done so, to read and ponder carefully a work we should like to see in the hands of every thoughtful student to whom the trustworthiness of his Bible is a supreme matter—Dr. W. L. Baxter's "Sanctuary and Sacrifice," written in answer to the now dominant theory on the two points named. We believe it is simply crushing in its logical directness, and that Mr. Gladstone's words are not one whit too strong in his letter to Dr. Baxter: "Unless your searching inquiry can be answered, and your statements confuted, his [Wellhausen's] character, both literary and theological, is destroyed."

Why has not this work received a fuller attention in the reviews at the hands of the writers of the neo-critical school? As far as our own observation has gone, it has been almost ignored by that school; yet



the author of a book which some of the most competent judges in Great Britain have hailed as they do, was surely a foeman worthy of the steel of some "Higher Critic."

Dr. Baxter took two very important topics in the new scheme, as set forth by its protagonist Wellhausen, and, it is claimed, has demolished his opponent hip and thigh. If all this is a delusion, would it not be well that some Higher Critic should come forward and subject Dr. Baxter's book, point by point, to the same treatment that he has applied to Wellhausen, taking the arguments *seriatim* and refuting them. It is not enough to remark airily, as a recent Bampton Lecturer has done, that Dr. Baxter's is one of three specified "typical works," which "do not always appear adequately to recognise the importance of those conclusions which the research of a hundred and fifty years has rendered inevitable." Let us have *specific* refutation; let this bold rebel against the majesty of Higher Criticism be crushed as he deserves.

Unless and until this is done, we shall take the liberty of believing that the neo-critic holds discretion to be the better part of valour.

## CHAPTER III

### THE THEORY OF THE WELLHAUSEN SCHOOL

WE now return to the history of the scheme as we last saw it, as modified by Ewald and Hupfeld. We remarked some little time ago that it was in connection with the legal parts of the Pentateuch that the idea of development was first broached. It will be remembered that so far we had an Elohist document, a *Grundschrift*, earlier than the other elements of the Pentateuch, whereas the Book of the Covenant was Jehovistic. The beginning of the revolution may be seen in Graf's book, "The Historical Books of the Old Testament," 1866 (though Graf owed the impulse to his work to his Strasburg master, Reuss), in which an attempt was made to separate the Elohist document into its historical and legal elements. While still conceding to the former its old claim to be the most ancient part of the Pentateuch, it was asserted that the latter was the most recent.

The critic in whose hands the movement thus initiated was pushed on to its full development was Dr. Abraham Kuenen, of Leyden (1828-91), who in

his "Religion of Israel" maintained that the Elohist document [*i.e.* apart from the so-called "Second Elohist"], both in its historical and legal portions, represented the latest element of the Pentateuch. This theory, advocated and further worked out by Dr. Julius Wellhausen in his "History of Israel," is the phase of "critical" thought at present dominant.

We shall in due course give an outline of the scheme as generally presented; but first we wish our readers to have some idea of the school of theological thought, apart from its criticism, from which this scheme has emanated.

It is well for disputants always to realise the plane on which they are disputing. What, then, do we profess to believe about the Bible—Old Testament and New Testament? Let us say anyhow that we believe it to be a Divine gift, mercifully granted us by Providence for instruction, comfort, and warning; that whatever allowances we make in that it is given us through a human agency, it is in its essence Divine—be the casket earthen, the true jewel is therein. "They are they that testify of Me," says our Saviour of the Old Testament Scriptures. The Risen Christ, victorious over death and the powers of evil, to Whom all power was given in heaven and earth, expounded in "all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." To the Jewish Church "were committed the oracles of God," says St. Paul. If those words are true, God Himself entrusted the

Jews with this precious deposit ; if they are not true, who is to decide for us where the dividing line of truth and falsehood falls in the New Testament ?

Let us now see what are the general views of Kuenen and Wellhausen in this matter. As regards the former, we shall quote some of his own words from his "Religion of Israel." He defines his standpoint plainly. After referring to "the principal religions," he adds : "For us the Israelitish is one of those religions, nothing less, but also nothing more" (vol. i. p. 5, Eng. Trans.). To this view of Judaism, Christianity is then added ; and to the objection that the sacred records of both religions claim a supernatural origin for them, it is answered that the same holds good for other religions—"Zarathustra, Sakya-Mooni, and Mahomet pass among their followers for envoys of the Godhead, and in the estimation of the Brahmin the Vedas and the laws of Manou are holy, divine books" (*ibid.*, p. 6). Such an idea as that God chose out one nation of old to be the special depository of His truth, and that the religion they held was the preparation for Christianity, is no longer "tenable in our days."

This is pretty definite. There is, then, nothing essentially Divine in Judaism, or indeed in Christianity, any more than there is in the teaching of the false prophet Mohammed. Are we then to view Professor Cheyne as speaking quite seriously when he says of Kuenen, "With him I cannot help group-

ing such respected Church theologians as Lightfoot and Westcott"? ("Founders of Old Testament Criticism," p. 190). For learning, doubtless; for honesty, doubtless; but as a like teacher of the great truths of God, surely no. Professor Cheyne makes a passing remark, (*ibid.*, p. 186) on Kuenen's "Want of sympathy with traditional forms of Christian theology." "Traditional forms" is somewhat vague; anyhow, we see that one thing is the belief in the absolute truth of what we are taught in the Gospels of the trustworthiness of the Old Testament.

Take next the case of Wellhausen. It is startling to find the late Bishop Hervey speaking of his "running fire of profane banter" ("The Books of Chronicles," p. 17); and the late Bishop Alfred Blomfield refers to his "shameless irreverence" ("The Old Testament and the New Criticism," p. 23). These are strong words; it may be well to see how far they are justified. The following citations are taken from Wellhausen's "Prolegomena to the History of Israel" (Eng. Trans., 1885). "On the first night of Isaac's sleeping on the sacred soil of Beersheba (Gen. xxvi. 24), he receives a visit from the *Numen* there residing, and in consequence rears his altar" (p. 31). After declaring that a high antiquity for the priestly legislation is bolstered up by imaginary history, he remarks: "Thus, so to speak, it holds itself up in the air by its own waist-

band " (p. 39). The Book of Chronicles incurs a good deal of Wellhausen's obloquy. Thus we read, with reference to the beginning of Josiah's reforms (2 Chron. xxxiv. 3), "Being at his accession still too young, the eighth year of his reign is, as a tribute to propriety, selected instead of the eighth year of his life" (p. 202). The unfortunate Chronicler's "statements have over and over again been shown to be incredible," though "it is indeed possible that occasionally a grain of good corn may occur among the chaff." Still his special points are but "paste pearls" after all (p. 224).

Sometimes flippancy is replaced by gross and open profanity. Thus it is said of Saul, "Jehovah, who, as a rule, does not change his mind, was mistaken in him" (p. 261); of the creation of Eve, "[Jehovah] builds the woman out of the man's rib, having made a previous attempt, which was not successful, to provide him with company" (p. 306); of the confusion of tongues, when Jehovah "brings about the dispersion of the human race, by the unity of which he feels himself threatened" (p. 312).

The incidents of the history of the Patriarchs have been full of Divinest lessons to millions, but, alas! "a whole series of stories about them are cultus myths" (p. 325). Indeed, "miracles, angels, theophanies, dreams, are never absent from the palette" (p. 326).

If there is one person who is constantly held up

to reprobation as much as or worse than the Chronicler, it is the author of the so-called Priestly Code, of whom we shall have much to say by-and-by. Let one allusion suffice: "He brushes up the legend, and makes history of it according to the rules of art: he kills it as legend, and deprives it of all real value," &c. (p. 338).

We venture to think that we have adduced sufficient examples completely to establish the charge we brought, and yet it is this writer the essence of whose scheme underlies the mass of modern works of Higher Criticism, and who is appealed to throughout by his English followers, who, while keeping clear, thank God, of his irreverence, yet follow steadily in the path which their leader has pointed out.

Yet, is there not something strangely inconsistent in all this? There is much relevance in Bishop Blomfield's question (*op. cit.*, p. 31): "What would be thought of a Mohammedan commentator on the Koran who should cite among his chief authorities the Christian writers who have devoted themselves to exposing the errors and vices of Mohammedanism? Yet it would be impossible for any Christian writer to say worse things of the Koran than Wellhausen has said of the Old Testament."

Let us now try roughly to indicate the view taken of Old Testament history and of the Old Testament books by Wellhausen and his school, remembering that on a good many points of detail there are some

differences between various members of the school. When we wish to lay stress on any of these divergencies we shall give specific references ; but we shall, as a rule, put the matter generally.

Old Testament history, then, may be said to begin in the time of Moses—"in point of fact, the history of Israel must be held to have begun then" (Wellhausen, *op. cit.*, p. 432). Behind Moses is myth and legend, from which the keen-eyed critic may or may not be able to glean some grains of history. Take what, to the believer, is the most prominent figure in the pre-Mosaic period : What of Abraham ? "He might with more likelihood" [*i.e.* than taking him for an "historical person"] "be regarded as a free creation of unconscious art" (*ibid.*, p. 320). Even as late as the time of Amos, though Wellhausen is not prepared to deny that the name was then known, yet "[Abraham] scarcely stood by this time at the same stage as Isaac and Jacob" (*ibid.*).

On citations such as the above, we have heard two remarks made by those who are seeking to make the best of things. The first is, that after all what the work of "Higher Criticism" has been is to present to men the Old Testament not as the utterance of the mind of God acting through mere mechanical and passive instruments, but as "mediated by a human agency." We are told that till recent generations the tendency was to view our Blessed Lord so exclusively on the side of His Divinity that



the coequal truth of His Humanity and the world of blessing it means to us was almost lost sight of. Then when many centuries had rolled by, the infinite wealth of truth on the other side began to appeal to the innermost hearts of men. That is quite true ; but is it not also true that, with this swing of the pendulum, the belief in the Divinity of the Incarnate Son has begun to pale, and the Perfect Humanity to be dragged down to the level of *fallible* men, while "critics" have not feared to rule how far this or that point of His teaching is infallible or not ?

The same line of thought holds good also for the Bible, the written Word. It is doubtless true that godly men of old tended, in their belief of it as the Word of God, to disregard the "human element," to view a book of Scripture as the unmixed dictation of the Holy Spirit. Let us by all means recognise the "human element," though not a human element acting blindly, but one with a Divine purpose behind it ; yet, be it well remembered, the present battle is not the question, Are these books in some sense divinely inspired, or are they merely uninspired, though honest human history ? No one who has read the *Prolegomena* can deny that the point disputed is, not, Are they inspired ? but, Are they true and credible accounts ?

The other remark which we wish to make is this. We are told, Surely it is possible to get from Wellhausen's scheme its essential truth without its

extravagances and its irreverence; they are not of the essence of the scheme. To this it might be answered, It has yet to be shown that the essence of the scheme *is* truth; but it is not true that all the extravagances of the theory are absent from the works of Wellhausen's English followers. Professor Driver, it is true, is more cautious than most, yet in some very unlikely quarters we find statements which show how the leaven has worked in England. Who would naturally go to a volume of the Bampton Lectures, meant by the founder to maintain, among other things, "the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures," for support of Wellhausen's views? Yet Mr. Ottley tells us, in his Bampton Lectures ("Aspects of the Old Testament," p. 109), that the oldest element of the Pentateuch (J) "seems to be based on ancient popular tradition," we have to do with "traditional folk-lore . . . worked up . . . by a devout literary artist." [As much as this might be said of the legends in the *Acta Sanctorum*.] Again (p. 111), "there may be possibly an element of truth even in the view that the figures of the patriarchs are tribal personifications," and so on. Although there is, perhaps, a certain lack of consistency in this writer's standpoint, the above may suffice to show how far certain English theologians have fallen into Wellhausen's wake. To have dropped Wellhausen's irreverence is not also to have discarded his extravagances.

The history, then, begins with Moses; but that does not mean that from Moses and onwards all our records are to be taken as absolute history. By no means. What happened was roughly this. The Hebrews, one of four petty kindred people, were of old settled in Southern Palestine, and about 1500 B.C. a section migrated into the pasture lands of Goshen. There these nomad shepherds continued happily for a time, till forced labour was demanded of them, and submitted to in despair. At last Moses urged them to flee, and though pursued by the Egyptians, the fortunate chance of a high wind enabled them to ford the arm of the Red Sea, while a change of wind brought back the waters, which annihilated the pursuers.

After a visit to Sinai, the fugitives settled at Kadesh, or, rather, made Kadesh their headquarters, for many years; till summoned to aid the Moabites against the Amorite foe. Thus the tract east of Jordan was won. Wellhausen does indeed allow that the foundation of the sense of national unity was the faith that "Jehovah is the God of Israel, and Israel is the people of Jehovah"; but then, "Jehovah is to be regarded as having been a family or tribal God, either of the family to which Moses belonged, or of the family of Joseph" (p. 433 and note).

Once in Palestine, the Israelites found themselves surrounded by "a population superior to themselves,

both in numbers and in civilisation." Whence, then, it might be asked, were they enabled to conquer them so completely? The civilisation of this Israel is said to be inferior to that of their neighbours; but what of their religion? Though Jehovah was their tribal deity, they were content to worship him under the form of a calf or young bull, as manifested in the action of Aaron, and later of Jeroboam. Wellhausen praises (p. 283) Eichhorn's remark that, however much Elijah and Elisha protested against the foreign deity Baal, "they were the actual champions of the Jehovah of Bethel and Dan, and did not think of protesting against his pictorial representation; even Amos makes no such protest, Hosea is the first who does so." For any who would wish to see how little force there is in this statement, I would refer to the Essay of my friend, the late Dr. John Sharpe, in *Lex Mosaica*, p. 343*f*.

The ritual of the people was summed up in a few simple festivals connected with agriculture, for which after ages devised historical origins.

So the nation went on with various fortunes, with the germ of Mosaism developing, till we reach the eighth century B.C., where we come to the earliest of the prophets whose writings have been preserved to us, Amos and Hosea. As to these all parties are agreed. It is also undeniable that they teach, and that in unmistakable terms, the truth of absolute monotheism. The truth of the unity of God is

taught as emphatically by Amos and Hosea as by St. Paul and St. John.

Here, however, we part company. The old-fashioned believer is content to suppose that whether blazing with noontide light at one time, or a mere glow-worm spark at another, the light of this central truth had existed for ages, testified to by Law as well as by Prophets. To the "critics" of later days, however, this is a delusion: we owe the teaching of monotheism directly to the Prophets, the Law is an after-thought; the old phrase must henceforth run, "The Prophets and the Law." [Reference may be made on the whole subject to Dr. Sharpe's Essay, as above.]

But what of the numerous allusions to details of the books of the Law in the Prophets? These, we are told, are not direct references, but merely embodiments of fragments of tradition, or some may be later additions, others chance coincidences. We would suggest to any reader whose mind is somewhat perplexed on this point, that he should read the prophecies of Amos and Hosea carefully through, and then ask himself the question, Which of the two hypotheses is most in accordance with the phenomena presented by the two prophecies? Is it simplest and easiest to suppose that monotheism is a new departure on the part of these prophets, is it a great step taken in advance, are they the absolute pioneers of the new belief? Or, on the other

hand, are they still inculcating, with no change, save from the change of historic condition, the same old story? In a word, is there any sign of discontinuity in the teaching?

We will take this opportunity of urging all who wish to have their convictions on this point deepened and strengthened, to read, if they have not already read, Dr. James Robertson's "Early Religion of Israel." Most people, even, we think, honest doubters, will find that the case as here submitted is an impregnable one. Dr. Robertson deserves our sincere gratitude for his masterly book. It is not indeed exactly easy reading, but it will fully repay the labour spent upon it.

We will now turn to consider how the books of the Pentateuch are to be disintegrated into their component parts. As we have said, "critics" differ here and there in details, but the broad features are much the same with all. As a specimen of the general outline, we will cite the dates as given by Mr. C. J. Ball, prefixed to his edition of Genesis in the "Rainbow" Bible.

Our earliest "source," then, is the Jehovistic document (J), composed in the Southern Kingdom sometime after 850 B.C. The narrative begins with the account of Creation (Gen. ii. 4*b*). What we have, however, of this work is not homogeneous; it is in several strata. The oldest (J<sup>1</sup>) goes back to the date we have named (*e.g.* Gen. vi. 1-4), and the later

strata ( $J^2$ ) to about 650 B.C. (*e.g.* Gen. vii. 1-5). But this is not all: we have also tertiary strata ( $J^3$ ) due to about 640 B.C. (*e.g.* ii. 10-15). Surely a critic who could differentiate the work of 650 B.C. and 640 B.C. would be competent to give the exact date in narrowest detail.

Side by side with this work of the Southern Kingdom is the Elohist work (E: *i.e.* the "second Elohist" of earlier critics) of the Northern Kingdom, written prior to 650 B.C. (not later than 750 B.C. according to other "critics"), and these two strands, J and E, are combined into one record JE by a Redactor about 640 B.C.

If it be asked whence did the J and E writers get their details, it is said that they may have incorporated portions from older sources; there would be a certain amount of oral tradition more or less reliable or unreliable; there were fragments of ancient poetry still to be seen embedded in the text, and imagination, too, must be allowed a certain share (we have seen how Wellhausen interprets the story of Abraham). Sometimes ancient customs had crystallised into laws, and an historic basis had to be devised to substantiate them.

The next stage was Deuteronomy. It is assumed by most "critics" that the book found by Hilkiah in the Temple was Deuteronomy shorn of its beginning and ending, though this is an assumption to which much exception may be taken. It is next assumed

that the date when it was found is not much later than the date when it was written ; indeed, it had been written and then hidden where it would naturally be found. Thus Reuss remarks (see Wellhausen, p. 4) : “ Le Deutéronome (iv. 45-xxviii. 68) est le livre que les prêtres prétendaient avoir trouvé dans le Temple du temps du roi Josias.” So, too, Kuenen : “ If Hilkiash *found* the book in the Temple, it was put there by the adherents of the Mosaic tendency. Or else Hilkiash himself was of their number, and in that case he pretended that he had found the Book of the Law ” (“ Religion of Israel,” ii. 19 ; Eng. trans.). Anyhow, Deuteronomy, or the particular piece of it, is to be referred to the reign of Manasseh or of Josiah, the date of the discovery, that is to say, the posterior limit of its date, being 621 B.C.

Let it be specially noted that J and E, however unhistoric their statements, are records put forth in good faith. If, for argument’s sake, we accept the critic’s view of them, we should no more charge the writers with bad faith than the writers of any other semi-historic legends, say than Livy’s history of the early kings of Rome, or than the Arthurian cycle of legends.

But when we turn to the other two main “sources” (D and P), the case is quite different. If Deuteronomy really be what we are now told that it is, then it is absolutely a conscious forgery and deception, it is the



work of men who, embodying fragments of ancient laws and concocting new ones, sought to make their readers believe that they had before them what God had put into the heart of Moses to set before the people. If, with Professor Cheyne, we suggest that God had put it into the mind of writers thus to take "a bold step forward," we introduce a consequence which our readers may weigh for themselves.

Soon followed the fall of Jerusalem and the Exile, and now appears an element of a different kind. J and E had come from a "prophetical," that is, a non-sacerdotal source; but in the Captivity the priestly party create, in the light of the ritual of the destroyed temple, a code (P of most critics, the R Q of Wellhausen), in which a multiplicity of late rules are crystallised and fortified by the authority of an antiquity which is altogether imaginary.

Thus, we repeat once more, while J E is largely legend, it is honest and useful, its motive "is always and everywhere covered over with the many-coloured robe of fancy" (Wellhausen, *Proleg.*, p. 326). In P, the legend is "brushed up" or "killed" as the case may be, and, in the intention of its priestly fabricators, plotters to set on foot a supposed Mosaic Law, it is just as honest, just as defensible, just as much an outrage to God's truth, as the False Decretals.

We must suppose that D existed for some time as a separate book, but was in due time combined with J E by the inevitable Redactor, who "touched

up" J E where it seemed necessary, and added various little morsels of his own. Thus we have "Deuteronomistic expansions" (D<sup>2</sup>), due to the second half of the Exile (560-540 B.C.), as *e.g.* Gen. xxvi. 5.

The main Priestly Code (P) is said to be the work of priests in Babylonia about 500 B.C., though some would cautiously allow the presence of earlier elements; and in Lev. xvii.-xxvi. it is believed by some that we have the "Law of Holiness" (H), a work possibly due to the prophet Ezekiel. On the other hand, later strata, *e.g.* Gen. xlv. 8-27, are given a post-Exilic date, 440-400 B.C. As if even this were not sufficient, we are told that Gen. xiv. "seems to be derived from what might be termed an Exilic ['post-Exilic,' Kuenen] Midrash," or story.

A fresh Redactor now appears on the scene, and combines the triple elements J E + D + P into a connected work. Yet even now we have not got the books as we ourselves possess them. It constantly happens that words, phrases, declarations, occur in contexts where, on the "critical" theory, they have no business to be. To some minds this would be rather awkward for the theory, or, at any rate, for some details of it. By no means. All these are merely "redactional additions." There may be no objective evidence from Hebrew MSS. or the versions for these excisions; there may seem no absolute reason for the idea save to accepters of the

theory; yet the fiat has gone forth: These are the words of the Redactor.

We take an illustration or two. We read in Gen. ii. 4: "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth," &c., forming to any unbiassed mind the introduction to the account of Creation which follows. But the "critics" have ruled that the phrase "These are the generations of . . ." is characteristic of P, so that the first half of the verse must be assigned to P, and the second half to J; that is, ver. 4*a* is to be joined to what precedes, ver. 4*b* to what follows. This certainly seems awkward enough. But then the above phrase is always used as a superscription, which surely seems a very obvious matter. In the "Rainbow" Bible it is therefore comfortably settled that this is a "Redactional addition," and Mr. Ball has just one little matter of doubt, for he adds, "Whether this formula originally stood also, or only, at the head of c. i., cannot now be determined." Mr. Addis, however, is troubled with no uncertainty, for he remarks ("Documents of Hexateuch," ii. 195*n*): "The Editor who united P with J E must have moved the words from their place," *i.e.* from before i. 1 to form part of ii. 4. Again, let any one notice in an English Bible how often the title "LORD God" (*Jehovah Elohim*) occurs in Gen. ii. In every case the *Elohim* is marked as a mere "redactional addition." So, too, the *Jehovah* of Gen. xiv. 22, and a host more.

Of course, believing as we do in the essential antiquity of the Pentateuch, we are quite alive to the fact that it must have received a considerable amount of editorial care, and doubtless a certain number of explanatory glosses can be seen (*e.g.* Gen. xiv. 2, 3, 7, 8, 18), intended by reverent editors to make things clear for future generations of readers, and not as a touching up of the text for this or that "tendency."

There is yet one point more, and it is a melancholy one enough. To hack and hew the text is bad enough, and this talk of "redactional additions" amounts, one would have thought, to a needless robbery of tiny portions of Scripture; yet there is something which, to our mind, is yet more dangerous. None but those who have had much to do with the texts and commentaries by the more advanced "Higher Critics" can realise to how great an extent the craze for altering the text has gone. We are not referring to things which merely affect the Masoretic pointing; this is but the embodiment of ancient tradition, and though not to be deserted without due cause, is not to be credited with infallibility. Nor are we referring to cases where the Hebrew and the versions are at variance. There are cases, doubtless, though we question if there are as many as we are sometimes told, where the versions can be brought in to correct the original text. What we are referring to is, cases where, the

Hebrew and versions being at one, critics, on the purest subjective grounds, venture to alter the text.

Our meaning can be brought out best by taking a definite illustration. For this purpose we will choose Jacob's blessing, Gen. xlix. 1-27, as set forth in the "Rainbow" Bible, noticing merely such alterations as (1) do not merely imply a change of the Masoretic pointing; and (2) are not cases where the Hebrew is faced by a consensus of versions:—

*For*

*Read*

Ver. 2. "hearken."	"listen" (the Hebrew word is a totally different one).
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Ver. 4. " <i>he went up to</i> my couch."	" <i>the couch of thy sire.</i> "
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Ver. 5. The alteration in this verse may *perhaps* plead the authority of the LXX.

Ver. 6a. A grammatical form changed, without affecting the sense, but without warrant.

Ver. 6b. "self-will."	"wrath" as in ver. 7.
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Ver. 8. " <i>shall be.</i> "	"shall seize" is inserted without any evidence.
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Ver. 9. "from the prey."	"possibly we should restore <i>from the desert.</i> " "Restore" is happy.
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Ver. 10. "Shiloh" is replaced by *shelloh* ("that which is his"), but this can *perhaps* claim the authority of the LXX. and Aquila.

Ver. 11b. The spelling of a word (*suthoh*) altered without any evidence.

Ver. 13b. "an haven of ships." This is "tautologous and pointless." We must read "remain in ships."

Ver. 13b. "and his border shall be unto Zidon." This is "a marginal gloss . . . thoroughly prosaic."

Ver. 15a. "pleasant." "rich." We are told "rich pasture would be more attractive to the eye of an ass than a lovely landscape."

Ver. 18. "Probably the aspiration of some marginal annotator writing after the fall of the Northern Kingdom."

Ver. 19. A grammatical change is made which, though it does not affect the sense, has no real documentary authority.

Ver. 20. "bread." "inheritance" [a totally different Hebrew word],

Ver. 21. Instead of the existing verse, we are to read "Naphtali is a branching vine, that yieldeth comely fruit." In this case, out of the *six* words of which the Hebrew verse consists, *three* are unwarrantably altered.

Ver. 22. Here we have reckless emendation at work. The second word in the Hebrew of verses 21, 22 (*porath*, "fruitful" [further altered, as above],

and *ayyalah*, "a hart") have been interchanged. Some ancient copyist, and that before the time of the LXX., had simply blundered.

Ver. 22*b*. "Whose branches run over the wall" [four words in Hebrew]. Of these four, only the last is left untouched—and we are told to read "in his tracks they went up to lie in wait."

Ver. 24*a*. "His bow abode in strength." "Their bow was broken with strength." This is the LXX.; but *two* out of the *three* Hebrew words have to be altered.

Ver. 24*a*. "The arms of his hands were made strong." "The arms of their might [*lit.* their hands] have been shattered." The sentence as it stands in the Bible "is certainly corrupt."

Ver. 24*b*. "Fromthence . . . Israel" "From the arms of the help [or, Helper] of Israel."

Ver. 26*a*. "My progenitors unto . . ." For this, which is the reading of the Masoretic text, a slight change of the points gives the rendering of the LXX. "the eternal mountains," which is thus parallel to "the everlasting hills." The variant fairly admits of discussion, but we are not prepared to say, with Mr. Ball, that the Masoretic text "is evidently corrupt." Still, be that as it may, the change of

the second "blessings" of the verse into "the height" is the merest tampering.

To many a one to whom his Bible is a treasure beyond compare, such a tabulation as the above is an object-lesson pregnant with significance. He believed that he possessed the very Oracles of God, and though he may have thought it within the bounds of reasonable probability that here and there, in the long course of centuries, a stray error of text may have crept in, yet to be told that in one ancient prophecy there was a corruption of text in eighteen out of twenty-six verses is to create an infinity of doubts as to the trustworthiness of the text of Scripture generally. Let us again repeat, it is no case of interpretation, no case of an issue between the Hebrew and the versions, it is whether the text is to be accepted as it stands, or whether the critic is to amend it on purely subjective grounds. The story is told that the late Master of Trinity once remarked of a very distinguished Cambridge scholar, that he was spending his leisure in rewriting the Greek Tragedians. Even if this jest were taken quite seriously, this would be but an infinitesimal matter to what we are dealing with now. If the Bible is what Christians believe it to be, we have a right to protest, and we do protest, at the light-hearted way in which this tampering goes on. The Hebrew Bible is not a *corpus vile* on which any experiment may be made, it is, besides all else, a



sacred trust, which it is our duty to guard and hand on unimpaired.

We will refer now in passing to a technical matter, which, though no change of meaning is introduced, yet exemplifies in a striking way the freedom with which hands are laid on the text. What we are going to say now is familiar to any Hebrew student; we shall try to make the matter intelligible to those who are not Hebraists. In the Old Testament, outside the Pentateuch, there are distinct forms for the personal pronouns *he* and *she*. The former is *hu* (i.e. *He*, *Vav*, *Aleph*), the latter *hi* (i.e. *He*, *Yod*, *Aleph*). In the Pentateuch, however, save for a very few stray exceptions, *hu* does duty for both genders, i.e. is “*epicene*.” This has been viewed by many as an archaism, which the “critics” of course deny. “We have to do,” says Mr. Ball, “not with a genuine archaism, but with the consecration of a blunder, or at best a caprice.” The form may or may not be an archaism—this is not the place to enter into the discussion; it was with no such purpose that we introduced the topic. We will only remark that it characterises all strata alike, J and E and D and P—a rather startling unanimity.

Our reason for mentioning this rather technical matter is for quite another purpose. The dispute hinges, it will be seen, on the middle one of the three Hebrew letters. The “*epicene*” form is an archaism, say one party. No, say the others,

originally the word was simply written *He*, *Aleph*, and pronounced *hu* or *hi*, as the gender required. The insertion of the vowel-letter in the MSS. of the Pentateuch was an adaptation to the later use of the language. Well, then, why not assume the theory to be fact, and act accordingly? If that conclusion is only recognised, all grounds are cut away for the supposed archaism. Thus, in those books of the Pentateuch which have appeared in the "Rainbow" series, the personal pronouns *he* and *she* are alike represented by a word of two letters only, *He*, *Aleph*, the materials on which a decision would have to be made being blotted out.

We will venture to tell the following anecdote, which seems not altogether irrelevant. Many years ago, when there was a warm dispute going on as to whether Maintz or Haarlem could claim the glory of having been the birthplace of printing, we were told of some official at Maintz—one keenly interested in the subject—who said that should any evidence come in his way, some hitherto unknown document, which should seem to strengthen the case for Haarlem, he should feel bound in honour to destroy it.

The approximate dates named for the various strata of the Hexateuch are, as we have said, those assigned for them in the "Rainbow" Bible, which we chose because of its decided definiteness. Some critics cautiously avoid such precision. Professor

Driver, though a disciple of Wellhausen, while, of course, free from his irreverence (would that he felt it his duty to protest against the language used by the latter), is more guarded as to any definiteness in the dates of the "sources," and also more cautious in the attempted disintegration of the portions known as JE, of which he says "the lines of demarcation between them frequently cannot be fixed with certainty."

We will now try and give our readers a fairly close idea of the document known as P, which, it will be remembered, is the child of the Exile, 1000 years after the date of Moses. We are told by Professor Driver that "in Genesis, as regards the limits of P, there is practically no difference of opinion among critics." It follows, therefore, that should a scholar, after thoughtful weighing of the evidence, disbelieve in the Exilic document, he is to be ignominiously rejected from the body of "critics."

Let it be carefully borne in mind that the question is not, Were documents made use of in the composition of the Pentateuch or Hexateuch?—doubtless they were—but (1) what of the date and consequent historic value of the component parts? and (2) while recognising certain broad general features, can we for a moment believe the minute dissection, even into half verses, which the "critics" claim to have settled?

The following statement as to the contents of P is

that of Professor Driver ("Introduction," p. 11, ed. 6), who tells us that "in the earlier part of [Genesis] the narrative appears to be tolerably complete, but elsewhere there are evidently omissions." We shall call attention to some of the "omissions" by-and-by.

We have, then, Gen. i. 1-ii. 4*a*: v. 1-28, 30-32: vi. 9-22: vii. 6, 11, 13-16*a*, 17*a* [except *forty days*], 18-21, 24: viii. 1-2*a*, 3*b*-5, 13*a*, 14-19: ix. 1-17, 28, 29: x. 1-7, 20, 22, 23, 31, 32: xi. 10-27, 31, 32: xii. 4*b*, 5: xiii. 6, 11*b* [from *and they*], 12*a* [to *Plain*]: xvi. 1*a*, 3, 15, 16: xvii.: xix. 29: xxi. 1*b*, 2*b*-5: xxiii.: xxv. 7-11*a*, 12-17, 19, 20, 26*b*: xxvi. 34, 35: xxvii. 46-xxviii. 9: xxix. 24, 29: xxxi. 18*b* [from *and all*]: xxxiii. 18*a*: xxxiv. 1, 2*a*, 4, 6, 8-10, 13-18, 20-24, 25 [partly], 27-29: xxxv. 9-13, 15, 22*b*-29: xxxvi. [in the main]: xxxvii. 1, 2*a* [to *Jacob*]: xli. 46: xlv. 6-27: xlvii. 5-6*a* [as in LXX.], 7-11, 27*b* [from *and they*], 28: xlviii. 3-6, 7: xlix. 1*a*, 28*b*-33: l. 12, 13.

So far we have given the matter in rather minute detail: in the remaining books it may suffice to put the statement a little more generally, not troubling ourselves as a rule with portions of a verse, or specially alluding to cases alleged to be doubtful.

Some differences of detail will be found in Professor Driver's analysis of Exodus from that of Wellhausen. It runs, Exodus i. 1-5, 7, 13, 14: ii. 23*b*-25: vi. 2-30: vii. 1-13, 19, 20*a*, 21*b*, 22:

viii. 5-7, 15*b*-19: ix. 8-12: xi. 9, 10: xii. 1-20, 28, 37*a*, 40-51: xiii. 1, 2, 20: xiv. 1-4, 8, 9, 15-18, 21-23, 26-29: xvi. 1-3, 6-24, 31-36: xvii. 1*a*: xix. 1, 2*a*: xxiv. 15-18*a*: xxv.-xxxi.: xxxiv. 29-35: xxxv.-xl.

Leviticus, all; even the alleged oldest part of Leviticus, "the Law of Holiness" (H), chaps. xvii.-xxvi., is still Exilic, and by some declared to be the work of Ezekiel.

Numbers i. 1-x. 28: xiii. 1-17*a*, 21, 25, 26*a*, 32*a*: xiv. 1, 2, 5-7, 10, 26-30, 34-38: xv.: xvi. 1*a*, 2*b*-11, 16-24, 35-50: xvii.-xix.: xx. 1*a*, 2, 3*b*, 4, 6-13, 22-29: xxi. 4*a*, 10, 11: xxii. 1: xxv. 6-18: xxvi.-xxxi.: xxxii. 18, 19, 24-33: xxxiii.-xxxvi.

It may be worth while to sketch briefly the general contents of this document, so far as it has come down to us, that we may understand how much has to be surrendered. The "Epic of Creation" in Gen. i. is the work of the Babylonian fabricators, but either they did not write at all of the special details of the Creation of man and the Fall, or of the story of Cain and Abel, or else the Redactors thought that these topics could be better derived from elsewhere. The table of generations in chap. v. is due to P, as indeed are most of such matters. It will be noticed, however, that v. 29 is assigned to J. We should have thought, on the analogy of the other generations, that the name

of Lamech's son would at once be put on record. To say that the "a son" of v. 28 is an editorial alteration for an original "Noah," which was rendered unnecessary when v. 29 was inserted, is an argument easily made, but is no argument.

The whole story of the Flood, contained in Gen. vi.—ix., is divided between P and J. It may be readily allowed that a twofold strand shows itself in the Bible story; pieced together, on the neo-critical theory, in the period of the Exile. We allow the twofold element, but we altogether refuse to believe in the alleged date; and feel that the "critics" should direct their energies to neutralising the awkward inferences which can be drawn from the existence of the Chaldaean Flood-story. To this we propose to devote some little space by-and-by.

Most of the genealogies of chaps. x., xi., but not the story of the Tower of Babel, fall to P. We now come to the story of Abraham. It will be noticed that of the dozen chapters or so in which this is enshrined, two (xvii., xxiii.), are taken bodily from P; and chap. xiv., though from another "source," may be added here. This is not the place to enter upon any discussion as to the date of any of these chapters, which, let us again repeat, are referred to the Exile, but it will be our duty later on briefly to summarise the evidence on which archæologists push back the date assigned by the "critics" to chap. xiv. by a good many centuries. Beyond these chapters,

the portions assigned to P in the story of Abraham are short paragraphs only, often single verses, nay, once or twice, half verses (xvi. 1*a*, xxi. 1*b*). Yet among these short passages there are some which we should be unwilling to lose—and lose them we surely do if we are to believe that these were written a thousand years after the age of Moses and fifteen hundred after that of Abraham himself—*e.g.* the journey of Abram's family from Ur of the Chaldees to Haran and Terah's death there;<sup>1</sup> the birth and the date of the birth of Ishmael; the solemn mention of God's remembrance of Abraham and Lot on the destruction of the cities of the Plain (xix. 29); the birth and date of the birth and naming of Isaac, and the death and burial of Abraham.

To the story of Isaac, P does not contribute much; save (as is his way) his age at his marriage and at the birth of his children, his trouble when Esau took Hittite wives, his charge to Jacob, and his blessing of him before his flight to Padan-Aram, and his death and burial.

Nor is much contributed to the story of Jacob. We may be allowed to express our surprise that the Redactor should have thought it necessary to borrow

<sup>1</sup> It seems curious that the Exilic fabricator, who suppressed and modified at will, did not see the trouble he would cause to future readers by making Terah's age 205. A schemer with his wits about him would simply have made him 145, and avoided all difficulty. More especially should this be named, for part of the difficulty rests on the seventy-five years of xii. 4*b*, also due to P.

from P, xxix. 24, 29. Save for these verses, practically the whole of the chapter and of the following chapter is due to J E. In ch. xxx. Bilhah and Zilpah are both mentioned several times ; surely, therefore, it is not unnatural to suppose that J E, as well as P, would have some preliminary mention of them. Clearly, as is so often the case, the two verses (of P) are presupposed by the succeeding context of J E. Jacob's arrival at Shalem, much of the story of Shechem,<sup>1</sup> the blessing of Jacob by God at Bethel, are all due to this late hand.

There remains Joseph. His story, like those of his father and grandfather, and, in a less degree, his great-grandfather, is mostly due to J E ; but P contributes a few points—his age when the trouble befell him, and when he stood before Pharaoh. That the names of the "Seventy" who went down into Egypt are due to P goes without saying. So, too, are Pharaoh's assignment of Goshen to Joseph's brethren ; Joseph's introduction of his father to Pharaoh, and his settling of his family in the land of Rameses ; Jacob's claim to call Ephraim and Manasseh his own ; his final charge to his sons to bury him in the cave of Machpelah ; his death and his burial.

<sup>1</sup> It may be noticed as curious that the archaism of the epicene *na'ar* for *na'arah* (a girl) in this chapter (xxxiv.), occurring elsewhere only in Gen. xxiv. and in Deut. xxii., is found alike in those parts of this chapter which are by P, and in those which are not. Did the two writers drift into the same phenomenon ? or did the Redactor, by "working over," give a false air of antiquity to the "source" which had not indulged in the form ?



Before we pass on to Exodus, let us once more remind our readers that, to put the matter broadly, the first twenty chapters of Genesis are made up from J and P, the remainder from J and E; a reference to the table we have given will show how small an amount in the aggregate are the portions assigned to P in these later chapters. Surely this in itself is calculated to arouse suspicion. It is not as if P had altogether disappeared when we get into the later chapters, else it might have been suggested that to a continuous record (J), covering the whole period till the death of Joseph, were added two other less perfect records, one for the earlier (P), and one for the later history (E).

The Redactor has *almost* dropped one "source"; but one is tempted to ask, Having dropped it so much, might he not as well have dropped it still more? Can it be supposed that J E did not contain many of the points where a fragment has had to be borrowed from P? It hardly seems likely, for example, that J E would have omitted the mention of the death and burial of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; it hardly, therefore, seems worth the Redactor's while to have deserted his main source and embodied little paragraphs from P.

Let us now note briefly some of our losses in Exodus, though our readers may do well to work through our table at length for themselves. It is only from Exod. ii. 23 that we learn that the

Pharaoh of the Oppression and the Pharaoh of the Exodus were different. Now the "critics" assign verses 1-22 to J E and also 23*a*. The reason for this last assignment is obvious ; the "critics" would otherwise fairly lay themselves open to the retort that so important a fact could hardly have been passed over in J E, so that it would be awkward for them to have to admit that it was taken from P. The result is, that after the story of Moses' Midianite life, comes a half-verse, with no connection with what has gone before, a solitary fact stranded high and dry, and then 23*b*-25 are added from another "source." Yet ver. 23 as it stands coheres perfectly as a whole : the Pharaoh died, but this made no change in the policy of persecution.

The whole of ch. vi., save ver. 1, is from P, including the renewal of the promise to Moses by the name Jehovah, and the message to Israel. So too is the narrative of the wonders shown by Moses with his rod before Pharaoh, the plague of boils, and the ordinances of the Passover (save a few verses). Among the portions thus sacrificed is the command that no bone of the Paschal Lamb should be broken (Exod. xii. 46 : *cf.* John xix. 36).

As we have already said, according to the Wellhausen school the Israelite festivals were originally simply *agricultural* festivals, the historical references being excogitated afterwards. To P also belong the mention of the halting-places of Israel in their flight,

the rule that manna was not to be gathered on the Sabbath (xvi. 23), the statement that Moses entered into the cloud on the top of Sinai, that his face shone when he came from the presence of God, and that he put a vail on his face after he had done talking with the people. To these must be added the whole of the ritual contained in the later chapters of Exodus. The story of the tabernacle is not even a tradition set forth after a thousand years had passed, it is simply a fraud, a conscious, deliberate fraud. There never was a tabernacle, the whole is a fabrication, created in the light of the facts of Solomon's temple as an imaginary precursor, devised by priests who wished by this sham antiquity to give a fictitious value to the new code they were launching on the nation. Once accept the Wellhausen theory, and the Wellhausen estimate of the amount of reverence due to our documents is natural enough; but it passes our understanding how some English "critics" can accept such a conclusion, and yet talk as if we were still dealing with the inspired Word of God, the oracles of the God of Truth. Wherein, so far as purity of motives goes, save that the former looks to the advantage of a class, the latter to that of individuals, does the Priestly code stand on a higher level than the Koran or the Book of Mormon?

We have already said that the whole of Leviticus is referred to the Exile, and much of Numbers—the

order of the tribes in their tents, the duties of the three great Levitical families, the law of the Nazarites, the allowance of a second passover for those who were unclean or absent,<sup>1</sup> the statement how the cloud over the tabernacle guided "the removings and encampings of the Israelites," the names of the twelve spies sent from Kadesh, large portions of the story of the revolt of Korah, the story of Aaron's rod, and of his death and the appointment of his successor, the slaying of Cozbi, the story of Zelo-phthead's daughters, the assignment of the country east of Jordan to the two and a half tribes, the details of the Law as to the cities of refuge—all these and many others, together with practically the whole ritual element in Numbers, with all details as to genealogy, or of the record of the wanderings or the apportionment of the spoil, are the work of P, a thousand years after the supposed events, and many hundred miles away from the places where they

<sup>1</sup> It will be remembered that this permission, mentioned in Num. ix. 6*f.* as granted for a special occasion, was expanded by Hezekiah into a rule for the whole kingdom at the passover in the first year of his reign (2 Chron. xxx. 2*f.*). However, "all critics are agreed" that details recorded in Chronicles which are not also in Kings are unworthy of credit. It sometimes inspires us with some little surprise that "Higher Critics" of our own Church, professing so plainly the views they hold about Chronicles, should not use their best efforts to rid our Lectionary of chapters from it; or indeed, since those parts which are duplicates of Kings are otherwise provided for, and the parts which are peculiar to Chronicles are mainly unhistoric, why the right of Chronicles to form part of our Canon should not be reconsidered.

were declared to have happened. In other words, this is clearly a case where we are justified in believing just as much or as little as we please, especially—and this must never be forgotten—since this is no honest, however misguided, attempt to reconstruct a far-off past with the help of such frail traditions as may be got at, but a deep-laid scheme to throw dust in the people's eyes.

## CHAPTER IV

### SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE FOREGOING THEORY

WE have thus, in a general way, indicated the contents of P, as we are assured by the "critics" it has come down to us. We will venture to suggest what we think will be a useful object-lesson to the general reader. Let him take an English Bible, and mark with a coloured pencil the portions of P as indicated above, remembering that the parts so marked are of a date one thousand years later than the age of Moses, the parts not so marked being only six or seven hundred years later. Let him then note that, to say nothing of Exilic and post-Exilic strata in what professes to be pre-Mosaic history, a very large part of the Mosaic period itself is gone. Not only does the whole code of Leviticus, so far as any Mosaic authority attaches to it, disappear, but with it a very large number of what we had fondly hoped were fundamental verities of the story. The institution of the Passover as set forth in Exod. xii. was no declaration of Moses as inspired by God; the detailed account of the tabernacle and its furniture is not even mere legend, a poetic dream, it is a priestly

fraud. The ark and the mercy-seat of the Holy of Holies of that tabernacle, so minutely described in words ushered in by the heading "and the LORD spake unto Moses," is a dream set forth of what had been. When the account of it in Exodus was written, the ark, the sacred treasure of the first Temple, had become the spoil of the Assyrians or Chaldæans. We must no longer believe that Aaron and his sons were set apart for the priestly office, and so distinguished from other Levites.

We would again urge our readers carefully to examine the Bible which they have marked as we have suggested, and see of what we have been robbed — robbed, that is, if we consent to the robbery. Let it be well remembered that the portions called P could, on the hypothesis, have no historic value in any case merely from the lapse of time. A thousand years is a long period, if after that interval an attempt is made to write a history with little more than vague legends to help.

Two years hence patriotic Englishmen will celebrate the millenary of one of the noblest, perhaps the noblest, of our kings. Yet, though we have a certain amount of contemporaneous and other not long subsequent history, doubtless a large element of legend circles round the name of Alfred. Yet in the case of Moses, it is not merely such a gap of centuries that we have to face, though a thousand

years is a long time for legends to retain much historic reality; it is that at the end of the thousand years we have to deal not with an honest collector and editor of the legends of his people, but with one who twisted the legends as he would, and invented with the freest hand such additional matter as served his purpose.

Let us recall the words of a prominent critic of the new school, Dr. Duhm, "At one stroke the Mosaic period is wiped out." If it be said that there is still the J E portion, still even this, it will be remembered, is six or seven hundred years later than Moses, and D is still later.

We would once again remind our readers that we are not professing here to enter, save incidentally, into the arguments which may be urged against the neo-critical theory; we are merely aiming at showing them what the theory amounts to, and whither it tends to lead us. We would say then that there are a few general reflections which we think will strike thoughtful readers after considering what we have tabulated above.

And, first, in the literary analysis of which we have given a sketch, there is something like a claim to a quasi-omniscience. Since the Mosaic age about thirty-three centuries have passed by; nay, even if we accept the ruling of the "critics," and refer the finished Pentateuch to the age of Ezra, there are still twenty-three centuries to look back on. To indulge



anyhow in detailed rulings as to a document even twenty-three centuries old, *and on purely internal grounds*, is, one would have thought, rather hazardous. Yet a reference to the details we have given above will show how unhesitatingly the "critic" divides and subdivides again, till every verse and half verse is assigned to its proper date, just as if some external record had been kept in which every change was noted down. Everything is ruled for us, just as a skilled English lawyer might say of any item of law—such and such a point is due to clause so and so of an Act of Parliament passed in such and such a year of such and such a king; or as we can tabulate in minute detail the changes in the Book of Common Prayer from 1549 onwards.

Yet an Englishman who makes no claim to be viewed as a "critic," but is gifted with plain common sense, may well doubt the possibility, save in a very general way, of this literary analysis being trustworthy. Although illustration is not argument, it will often help to bring out more fully the force of arguments. Bishop Blomfield dwells on this in a striking way ("Old Testament and New Criticism," p. 11 f.), in some remarks on the plays which bear the name of Beaumont and Fletcher, and our readers may consult the whole passage with advantage. For example, the play of "Cupid's Revenge" came out in 1615 as the work of Fletcher, but critics have maintained on internal grounds that Beaumont had

had a hand in it. But then one writer thought he saw traces of a third author, and another writer went further and named him. Indeed, experts have sought to separate Beaumont's work generally from Fletcher's, and to lay their hands on other authors collaborating, seeing of these last no fewer than six whom they name, besides others unnamed.

If it be said, however, that such facts as these rather strengthen the case for Wellhausen and his disciples, the Bishop's apt rejoinder is that there are two very striking differences between the two cases. In the case of the Bible, we are told that "all critics are agreed," which is only true if critic and theorist are held to be synonymous; but in the case of the Beaumont-Fletcher plays there is, it seems, a very pretty divergence of opinion.

The other point, however, is a much more important one. In the case of the Bible, there is absolutely no external evidence, or rather, we should say, no external evidence is brought into the matter by the "critics." Yet in connection with the plays, we have a considerable amount of contemporaneous external evidence, statements of those to whom the various writers were personally known. It is as though, says the Bishop, we had a statement emanating (say) from Joshua or Caleb, and of undoubted authenticity (in the true sense of the word), to the effect that Moses wrote such and such things. But

no, the arguments brought forward are all internal and subjective.

We may take other illustrations. We will not suggest as an instance the strange craze that Bacon was the real author of Shakespeare's plays, though it has been defended in two large volumes of what profess to be arguments. We will take a very modern example. Probably a good many people, after reading the novels which bear the joint names of Sir Walter Besant and the late Mr. Rice, have puzzled themselves as to the parts to be assigned to the two authors. Yet it may well be doubted if a guess approximating to the truth has been made. We believe that Sir Walter Besant once defied his readers to solve the puzzle. Yet here are a number of works, known to be due to two collaborators, not workers of ancient days or of a far-off land, but simply two middle-aged English gentlemen, one of whom is still living. Yet the puzzle has been too much for the world of readers. It would be interesting work if some "critic" would try his hand on one or more of the novels and publish the results of his literary analysis. If it did nothing more, it would, doubtless, furnish some amusement for the surviving author.

Indeed, I should like to add another illustration, similar and yet distinct. The novel of "Blind Love," by Wilkie Collins, was left unfinished at the author's death. By his dying wish the manuscript was sent

to Sir Walter Besant to finish, together with a few pages of notes as to the author's conduct and conclusion of the story. In a letter from Sir Walter Besant to myself he remarks: "These notes I followed in my own words, and in the Preface, after stating the facts, I called upon the critics to point out, if they could, where Wilkie Collins ended and where I began; and to this day no one has succeeded in doing so, or even making a guess." Yet this is merely a case of two "sources" placed consecutively in their entirety.

Here we are taking the case of works known to be of dual authorship, but some curious results may be attained by a literary vivisection of writings known to spring from a single source. In Dr. W. H. Green's "Higher Criticism and the Pentateuch" (p. 119 *f.*) we are shown how the analysis which has worked such pranks in the Pentateuch may be applied to show that the parable of the Good Samaritan and the parable of the Prodigal Son may readily be disintegrated into two "sources."

Take just one other illustration. In the *Guardian* of December 21, 1892, there appeared a highly suggestive paper by the Rev. A. J. C. Allen, who, after applying the ordinary analysis to the well-known "Church History" of the late Dr. Schaff, showed conclusively that the work is a composite of "two distinct and mutually contradictory sources," and that there is "clear evidence of the work of a

later editor." This person was obviously an "inferior hand," and cannot be identified with Dr. Schaff, whose name was clearly attached to the book to promote its circulation. No one who has read this ingenious *jeu d'esprit* can deny that the current critical method has been applied with telling force and absolute fairness.

Our first point, then, has been that the minute analysis which the critic offers us of Pentateuch or Hexateuch is, in itself—considering the long lapse of centuries, considering, too, that we are dealing with a language our knowledge of which is, at its best, most imperfect—a result which we are not prepared to swallow, in its entirety, at the critic's bidding. A little reflection on the modern instances which we have cited, and others which may occur to our readers, will show how unsafe a guide is a mere linguistic analysis, lighted up by the torch of subjectivity.

We wish, in the next place, to call attention to what seems to us the extreme artificiality which the theory constantly exhibits. We have an editor with his documents before him. A modern historian would first digest his materials, and then set them forth in his own way; an ancient historian would, at pleasure, incorporate his materials as they stood. But, waiving all idea of inspiration—ay, and waiving too all idea of the gravity and dignity of history, as viewed by the eyes of that far-off age—we are

driven to see in the Redactor, the combiner of J E and P, simply the woodenest of sub-editors, with no conception beyond scissors and paste.

We will try to illustrate our meaning by some instances taken from Genesis. To the curious treatment ii. 4 has received we have already referred. It seems to us that the words "in the day that . . ." follow, in most natural continuity, on the word "when they were created." [This is but one word in the Hebrew.] Yet we are bidden to believe that several centuries intervened between the penning of the two.

In vii. 16, the words "and the LORD shut him in" are assigned to J. Yet vv. 13-16*a* and vv. 17-21 are assigned to P. Is it not rather strange that the editor should break off to borrow just three words (three in the Hebrew) from the other "source," and would it not be natural to suppose that some such statement as to the Divine protective action might be looked for in P itself?

We next subjoin viii. 2, 3, roman type marking J and italics P.

2. "*The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped*, and the rain from heaven was restrained; 3. And the waters returned from off the earth continually; *and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.*" [The two following verses are assigned to P.]

Was it worth the editor's while to turn to another

record and borrow the second clause of v. 2, which does but duplicate the preceding clause? Of course in speaking thus, we speak merely from the standpoint of the critics, with whom this is a matter of mere human editing. A great Bishop once said to the present writer, "If you were to change any word of Scripture for any other word, I think you could hardly avoid some loss." Alas! now it would seem as if the *onus probandi* rested on every word to justify its retention.

There is a further curious little point here which seems worth mentioning. In v. 3<sup>a</sup> [J] we have "returned continually," and in v. 5 [P] "decreased continually." In both these cases the adverb "continually" is represented in Hebrew by an idiom which, though not rare, is not common, two infinitives absolute "to go and return," "to go and decrease," where the "go" indicates the continuity of the other verb. Curious that J and P should light upon this idiom in closely neighbouring context, there being indeed only two other instances of the idiom in the whole of the Pentateuch, Gen. xii. 9, xxvi. 13 (both assigned to J).<sup>1</sup>

We cannot leave c. viii. without calling attention to a point where it seems to us that even a literary instinct should have stayed the critics' hands. In

<sup>1</sup> There was indeed a somewhat analogous phrase in Gen. viii. 7, "went forth to and fro," *Lit.* "went forth to go forth and to return"; but this verse has been rewritten in the "Rainbow" Bible, so that the idiom has disappeared.

the Bible story, Noah first sends out a raven and then a dove. In the Chaldaean<sup>1</sup> story, first a dove is sent, then a swallow, lastly a raven. The editor of Genesis in the "Rainbow" Bible has convinced himself that the Bible order is wrong, and accordingly interposes the sending forth of the raven between the first and second sendings forth of the dove, so that, apart from other changes, the verses there run 8, 6, 9, 7, 10. Yet one would almost have thought it a truism that Noah would send out his coarser and rougher messenger before the finer and gentler one.

To P are assigned xiii. 11*b*, 12*a*, the whole context, however, being the work of J. In the case of these two verses, it will be seen that the Redactor had to fall back on P for the information that the conversation between Abram and Lot led to their separation, and that while Lot chose the Plain of Jordan, Abram still stayed on in Canaan. Is it not rather strange that so obvious a result should have been omitted in J? It really comes to this: if you cut out a portion of text and find that the remainder still reads smoothly on, you are pretty safe in doing so.

We will take this opportunity of referring to a detail in v. 10, where the "Rainbow" Bible alters "Zoar" into "Zoan." The former is read by the Hebrew, and all the versions except the Syriac,

<sup>1</sup> This may be conveniently read in Dr. Sayce's "The Higher Criticism and the Verdict of the Monuments," pp. 107 *f*.



which reads the latter. The verse is not free from difficulty in the current text, and is constantly read aloud as if "like the land of Egypt, as thou comest to Zoar," formed one continuous clause. Yet Zoar is far away from Egypt. The only means by which the present text will give sense is to treat the verse as containing two consecutive parentheses—"And Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah), (even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt), as thou comest to Zoar." That is to say, Lot saw the well-watered tract in the direction of Zoar. This perhaps may seem a little forced, and there was a temptation to change to Zoan. Yet it seems to us there can be no doubt that the reference is really to Zar, the great fortress on the eastern frontier of Egypt, so that the allusion is to the sudden change when the garden-like land of Egypt replaced the dreary wilderness. This requires no change in the Hebrew letters, but merely in the Masoretic pointing.

We would further mention that vv. 14-17 are merely a "redactional addition," as indeed the cognate passage xv. 12*b*-17*a*, though this comes from a different Redactor. Both, it will be observed, are Divine promises of the weightiest character.

This is how xvi. 1 is made to stand: "*Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.*"

We thus find that for the opening statement of Sarai's childlessness, the Redactor, who for some little time had forsaken P, now referred to it for this fact. Yet the context, which is taken from J, shows a knowledge of the fact (v. 2), which therefore we might assume to be definitely stated. But if J formed a complete narrative of the subject, we see no conceivable reason why any should have been tempted to borrow a clause from another source.

We next take xxi. 1, 2.

1. "And the Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did *unto Sarah as He had spoken*. 2. For Sarah conceived and bare Abraham a son in his old age, *at the set time of which God had spoken to him*."

It is to be noticed that the second LORD in v. 1 (which, however, is said to be a "redactional addition") follows the verb "did" in the original.

Let us for argument's sake view the matter as one of mere human editing. We might then fairly ask, Whence the need of thus duplicating from J and P? The fulfilment of God's promise is clearly set forth in each. We can well understand an Eastern writer dwelling on a simple thought in varying language. Numberless passages in the Psalms, for example, illustrate this tendency. We thus feel no difficulty in the fact that in v. 1 the writer should tell us that God "visited" Sarah, and then that He "did" as He had said. But we find a very great difficulty in believing that an editor thought the first clause

incomplete, and so filled it in from his other "source."

The whole passage (xxv. 7-17) is assigned to P, save v. 11b, "and Isaac dwelt by the well [Beer] Lahai-roi," which is assigned to J. In the two other places where Beer-lahai-roi is mentioned (Gen. xvi. 14; xxiv. 62), we are dealing, it is said, with J, it is only consistent, therefore, to assign this clause also to him.

We find that xxxi. 18 stands thus: "And he carried away all his cattle [E] *and all his goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padan-Aram, for to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan.*" Save for one other fragment, of which we shall also speak, the whole passage, vv. 4-24, is said to be the work of E. Now, in v. 18 why should an editor have been tempted to borrow the latter clause? We cannot suppose that his main document ran, "and he carried away all his cattle. And Laban went. . . ." Are we to suppose, then, that he dropped an original second clause from E, to insert what we now have? Yet, on the hypothesis, it would be necessary to suppose the two documents running on *pari passu*, so that a piece could be dovetailed at any point in either from the other.

The other passage to which we referred is in v. 21, where the clause, "and he rose up and passed over the river," is assigned to J, the rest of the verse being by E. Seeing that Jacob would anyhow have to

cross the Euphrates, we venture to think either chronieler might be trusted to mention it."

What of xxxiii. 18 ?—" *And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan-Aram, and pitched his tent before the city.*" [It will be noticed that the R.V. translates the first clause differently, "and Jacob came in peace to the city . . .", but this does not affect our present purpose, and the Hebrew will bear either translation.] Clearly the second clause of v. 18 implies something like the preceding clause to come before it. What is there in the insertion from P to justify the editor's action? What new fact is there in it which the editor would think too important to lose? Surely he must have thought there was something special, for he had forsaken P since xxx. 18*b*.

Another instance or two must suffice us. We submit xxxvii. 2 as it is given us in the "Rainbow" Bible. Here we have three "sources." We mark P as before by italics, J by roman type, and put E in small capitals.

"*These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and he was a lad [with the sons of Bilhah and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives]; AND JOSEPH BROUGHT THE EVIL REPORT OF THEM TO THEIR FATHER.*" Then v. 3 relapses again into J. [The words in brackets are, we are told, a gloss.]

Our readers have merely to picture to themselves the Redactor with his three documents before him, picking out a morsel here and a morsel there. The point to bear in mind, however, is this—the three fragments in question were not fragments to him, in a box, as it were, to be dovetailed into their proper place; he had three continuous records, and therefore it is to beg the whole point to assume that the details alleged to be borrowed were not in each individual source. Apart from that, could any way of compilation be more preposterous? We have given up for argument's sake any idea of inspiration, but can any idea of historical work of the most elementary kind be recognised here. Can any parallel at all approximating to it be adduced from any history?

In xlvii. 27, the words “in the land of Goshen” are assigned to J, the rest of the verse being the work of P. It is true that all the other references to Goshen in Genesis occur in verses assigned to J; but do the “critics” gravely suppose that so crucial a fact as the settlement of Israel in Goshen would not be as familiarly known to the supposed P as well as to the supposed J?

We note down our last instance with some amazement. Gen. xlix. 1 stands thus: “*And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather . . .*” Then follows J, the previous context having been E. The editor is surely an extraordinary person. He found in J

Jacob's last address to his sons, with vv. 1b, 2, a general prelude. Did not J then mention the preliminary summoning? A plain man may naturally say that to call upon him to believe such a result as the present is a downright demand to him to surrender the dictates of his common sense, and he may with reason demur.

We venture again to remind our readers of the object we have had in citing the above instances. We were desirous of bringing out what we have called the "artificiality" of the process. A linguistic analysis which can lead to such results as those we have given, to such a mechanical piecing of fragments together, carries, we believe, its own condemnation with it. It is a matter where the common sense of the plain Englishman may be allowed to judge for itself, and we strongly advise such to consider carefully this aspect of the problem. The exigencies of the theory may require such chop-pings up, but those to whom the preservation of the Bible is a matter of infinitely greater moment than any theory, can view the matter free from any such *à priori* prepossessions, and take a broad common-sense view of the case.

There is yet a third point which we think will strike many a thoughtful reader. Here we have a long connected narrative made up from diverse accounts, centuries apart in date and widely differing in standpoint. Our readers will remember Well-

hausen's words as regards the nature of the "legends" in J E and in P. Is it conceivable that the figures of personages, seen partly in one account and partly in another, should present in the combination a consistent result, a natural artistic whole? Let us take the figure of Abraham, whose story is contained in about a dozen chapters. In those chapters we have J and E and P, to say nothing of the Exilic (or post-Exilic) Midrash of Gen. xiv., of the Deuteronomistic reviser, and of Redactional additions in abundance. Surely the portraiture hence derived must be a very heterogeneous mixture.

Yet may not the appeal safely be made to thousands of educated men and women—Does not the personality of Abraham, many-sided as it is, stand out with an individuality all its own? Is not the picture a natural and harmonious blend? It might be sufficient to point out that whatever element of truth may enter into the critical analysis of Genesis, however composite we consider its structure, still generation after generation of men, including the highest and keenest intellects of their age, have read Genesis without a shadow of suspicion that anything was wrong. It is only about a century and a half ago that the composite character of Genesis was first maintained. Surely, therefore, the "traditions" forming the component parts cannot have been heterogeneous, must have been in substantial agreement. It is inconceivable that if the

component elements had been alien in spirit, the badly according mixture should not have betrayed itself.

Let us try a parallel case. From Abraham to the date of the supposed P about fifteen centuries passed. If we reckon back fifteen centuries from the present time we come, roughly speaking, to the period when the Roman legions had left Britain, and Saxon invaders were beginning to force a lodgment in the land. It was then that King Arthur lived, if he were an historic personage at all. After a gap of centuries, which we may compare to that between Abraham and J and E, Sir Thomas Malory wrote his "*Morte d'Arthur*," the basis of Tennyson's "*Idylls of the King*." We may fairly compare Malory's embodiment of the legends with the view Wellhausen takes of the legends of J E—legends "always and everywhere covered over with the many-coloured robe of fancy." The interval of J E to P may roughly correspond to that from Malory to ourselves. Let us then suppose that Tennyson never wrote his "*Idylls of the King*," but that instead some writer with a decided "tendency" had taken up the legends and worked up therefrom a story with a purpose, let us say the purpose of showing that the British Church in the time of Arthur had no connection with the see of Rome. Such a writer would be like P, "brushing up" the legend, "killing" it for his own purpose to bring out a certain line of thought.



Does any one seriously suppose that if Sir Thomas Malory's work were combined with such a work as we have suggested above, in the way that J E is said to have been combined with P, the absolute heterogeneity of the materials would not be betrayed on every page? Yet wherein does the illustration fail?

## CHAPTER V

### SOME ARCHÆOLOGICAL RESULTS—UNITY OF PENTATEUCH—THEORY OF M. VERNES—IMPORTANT CAUTION.

BEFORE we leave this part of our subject we would point out that the defenders of the integrity and historic trustworthiness of the Pentateuch do not wish it to be thought that, while freely criticising the neo-critical theory (for why may not they also be "critics" ?), they are not also prepared to occupy a definite positive position as to the way in which they believe the archæological discoveries of the last generation have given a new setting to great Biblical truths, have widened our horizon, without modifying our belief in those truths; nay, so far from modifying it, have, in the deeper sense, vastly strengthened it.

To go into such a matter in detail is quite outside our present purpose. Readers may study with much profit Dr. Sayce's "The 'Higher Criticism' and the Verdict of the Monuments," and we would specially press upon their notice his chapter "The Babylonian Element in the Book of Genesis." We will, however,

by an example or two, briefly indicate our meaning. What view are we to take of the story of Creation, of the story of the Flood, of the War of the Four Kings (Gen. xiv.)?

And first, what of the story of Creation—or, rather, stories, for we have two—which evidently are primarily due to different sources, the account of the creation of heaven and earth, culminating in the creation of man (Gen. i. 1–ii. 3), and the special account of the creation of man and his settlement in the Garden of Eden (Gen. ii. 4–25)? The former of these is an Elohist account (the P of later “critics,” not E), and the latter a Jehovistic one. It may now be asked, Whence are these derived? and let us consider the matter first as a piece of literary history, and then as a matter of theology. The researches of archæologists—the late Mr. George Smith, Dr. Sayce, Mr. Pinches, and others—have brought to light a number of cuneiform tablets which give what may be called the Babylonian Epic of Creation, and manifest marked resemblances as well as marked differences from the Bible story. Those discovered by Mr. George Smith were thought not to be earlier than the seventh century B.C., but there is no doubt that the text of these was a late adaptation of much earlier materials, and much earlier materials have since been brought to light.

The story of Gen. i. has its parallel in the Babylonian story which represents Creation as a series of

successive acts. The first tablet pictures the beginning of all things, and primæval chaos with the watery abyss, the fifth the appointment of the heavenly bodies, and the sixth the creation of animals. The first Bible story ends with the institution of the Sabbath. But the Sabbath was a Babylonian as well as a Hebrew institution, and its extreme antiquity among the Babylonians is shown by the fact that while the word "Sabbath" is unmistakably Shemitic, it is actually referred by the Assyrian scribes to the pre-Shemitic Sumerian.

The Jehovistic story in Gen. ii. is strikingly paralleled in a tablet discovered by Mr. Pinches, written in Sumerian, with an interlinear translation into Babylonian Shemitic. This form of the story is, therefore, carried back to a remote antiquity. Dr. Sayce cites the rendering of the commencement of this text, and remarks (*op. cit.*, p. 95), "If the 'Elohistic' account of the Creation contains echoes of Babylonian philosophy, the 'Jehovistic' account carries us directly to Babylonia." Those who desire to see details may be referred to Dr. Sayce's account.

But we wish to point out that the differences between the Biblical and Babylonian stories are as significant as the resemblances. In the latter we meet with a wild polytheism, "a rabble of gods," to use Professor Maspero's phrase of the Egyptian deities. Yet in the Hebrew account we have the

most absolute and rigid monotheism. Again, while the Bible brings before us the action of an Omnipotent Creator, in the Babylonian story god after god is sent forth to cope with the forces of evil. Thus Sar, the primæval god of the firmament, is represented as saying, "I sent forth Anu; he did not go forth. Ea feared and returned. I sent Merodach, the Seer of the Gods; he felt the courage to face Tiamat." [We remark in passing that in the name *Tiamat*, the impersonation of chaos and darkness, we have the same word as the Hebrew *T'hom*, "the deep"; though the latter is but the natural chaos, the former a mythological embodiment.]

It must be abundantly evident to any careful reader that, spite of all the differences, there is a clear organic connection between the Hebrew and the Babylonian narratives. The resemblances are too great to allow us to suppose that we have got mere accidental coincidences. Therefore, either the Bible story of Creation is derived, however much pruning there may have been, from some such form of the Babylonian story as that which has come down to us; or the two in some sense run parallel, the Bible embodying a pure form of the story, the Babylonian tablets giving us the story encrusted with debasing superstitions.

The story of Gen. i. is a part of the supposed P, the work of priests in the Babylonian exile. We

might ask first whether it is probable—nay, is it conceivably possible—that priests so placed would have consented to have any connection, and for such a purpose, with what they would certainly view as an unholy thing? Consider the view taken of the religion of Babylon in such a passage as Isa. xlvi., xlvi., or take men like Ezra and Nehemiah, and ask ourselves whether we can conceive such men deliberately taking the Babylonian story as the very foundation of their religious teaching. We could as easily conceive of our own Reformers of the sixteenth century giving forth an expurgated edition of some mediæval *Acta Sanctorum* as a basis for the instruction of the Reformed Church. But, again, as a mere piece of literary criticism, we refuse to believe that the noble and simple epic of Gen. i. could by any process of pruning be derived from the Babylonian legends. We advise our readers to go over the two stories together and judge for themselves.

Dr. Sayce remarks that while archæology has proved the Babylonian connection, it has not settled the date of the Bible account; but, he adds, “all it can do here is to show that an early date is quite as possible as a late one.” He calls attention, however, to two very relevant points. In the first place, the later form of the Babylonian story, as set forth by Mr. George Smith, clearly displays a blend of “the divergent cosmological views which prevailed in Babylon,” while the record of Gen. i. is not multi-

form, but simple, clear evidence of an older origin (p. 84).

In the second place, we know that Babylonian culture prevailed in Palestine at a very early date, many centuries before the time of Abraham. It is impossible to tell exactly in what form the story of Creation reached Palestine in those far-off ages; but we may be absolutely sure that it did so come. Moreover, while we cannot say with certainty what written records Abraham possessed of his religion, still everything is tending more and more to encourage us in the belief that he would bring with him from Ur of the Chaldees to Haran, and thence to Canaan, his cherished tablets. He, a man of profoundly religious conviction, coming from a people in whom the religious spirit was so strongly developed as it was among the ancient Chaldæans, cannot be supposed to have gone forth at the Divine call like a modern Agnostic. He had much to learn, and much was afterwards revealed to him, but, like his descendant of long centuries after, "he knew whom he had believed," and we cannot doubt that he possessed written embodiments of the matter of that belief.

There is just one point more to which we should like to refer, and which we think our readers will do well to face. The kinship of the Hebrew and the Babylonian story of Creation has been shown, and less marked but still definite resemblances meet us

in other cosmogonies. Whence, then, we may fairly ask, is the story ultimately derived ? The subject is obviously one into which *human knowledge* cannot enter at all. Either we have some primal revelation, variously shaped under different conditions, drifting into mere mythological vagaries in the Babylonian story, while developed under a Divine guidance in the Hebrew story—either this, or mere poetic imaginings of ancient dreamers, with no higher claim upon our acceptance than any other poetry, save in so far as it reproduces a universal reaching out of human fancy to solve the primæval riddle.

It is *the nature of the topic* which forces these alternatives upon us, for we are not similarly tied down in ordinary history. Probably many of the histories of which St. Luke speaks in the Preface to his Gospel, though they were not inspired, still would be exceedingly precious, if they could be recovered, and the authors of them can in no sense be blamed for undertaking what in most, if not in all, cases was a work of loving reverence. But the Book of Revelation, unless it is absolutely what it professes to be, with its account of St. John's meeting with his risen and glorified Lord, has not merely no claim to be included in Holy Scripture, but is, from the very nature of the case, a fraud, with whatever intent it was written.

Though of course such a word as fraud would not enter into the case of the story of Creation, yet



surely if it is not in some sense the outcome of a primal revelation, reshaped, it may be, by further special Divine guidance, it is, as we have said, mere poetic fancy, which we are no more bound to believe than, shall we say, Milton's "Paradise Lost." It is no duty of ours to enter here into any discussion of a supposed antagonism between the Bible and science, even if we were competent to do so. It is enough to suggest three cautions, every one of which has been more or less disregarded by one side or the other. Let Bible students be quite sure what the Hebrew Bible actually says, and not identify with that ancient record mere interpretations of their own. For example, the Bible does not say that the sun and moon were *created* on the fourth day, which would be inconceivable. The Bible statement is of the appointment, not the creation, of the heavenly bodies, [to discharge their ordered functions. We may suppose, if we will, that only at this stage were they visible from the earth.

Secondly, let scientific students keep clearly apart scientific *truth* (which must be at one with Biblical truth) and scientific *theories*. For example, a good deal of criticism has been poured on Gen. i. for naming the creation of light on the first day, while the sun and moon do not appear till the fourth day; but we believe we are right in saying that scientific men of the highest distinction have declared that a reasonable scientific explanation can be given of

the matter. Thirdly, let a caution be observed by all alike, Hebrew students and students of science, not to begin by ruling what the teaching of Genesis is meant to be. If attack could kill, the Old Testament would have been but a mangled *corpus vile* by now, yet somehow it manifests a deathless energy which makes it as profoundly true to the Christian philosopher of the nineteenth century, as to the devout but utterly unphilosophical Christian reader of the dark ages.

We may next consider the question of the story of the Flood. The narrative, as contained in Genesis, is partly a Jehovistic (J), and partly an Elohistie (in this case P) record. Our readers can, if they wish, disintegrate the Bible account for themselves, by the help of the analysis of P contained in an earlier chapter.

Here, as in the story of Creation, we have a Babylonian version of the story with which to compare the Bible record. It was first discovered by the late Mr. George Smith, about twenty-five years ago, and tablets have since come to light of different recensions of the story. Our readers can see the story for themselves in the translation contained in Dr. Sayce's "The 'Higher Criticism' and the Monuments," pp. 107 *f.*; and in that of Mr. St. Chad Boscawen's "The Bible and the Monuments," pp. 114 *f.* In the latter work the story is conveniently arranged in parallel columns with the Jehovistic and Elohistie accounts in the Bible.

Before we call attention to the coincidences, let it again be pointed out that, as in the case of the Creation story, there is the striking contrast between the absolute monotheism of the Biblical and the wild polytheism of the Chaldaean story; as well as between the Omnipotence of God as set before us in the Bible, and the terror of the gods at the catastrophe as pictured in the other story. "In the heaven, the gods feared the deluge and hastened to ascend to the heaven of Anu. The gods cowered like a dog lying in a kennel. Istar [the Moon Deity] cried like a woman in travail" (ll. 101 *f.*; Sayce, *l.c.*).

The Jehovistic narrative and the Babylonian have in common the stress laid on the number Seven, the sending out of the birds (though not in quite the same form, as we have already pointed out), and the building of an altar after the deliverance, with a very striking difference of treatment which we shall presently mention. The Elohistie and the Babylonian stories agree as to the wickedness of man being the cause of the Deluge (a point, we believe, found in no other form of the Deluge tradition), and both tell of the token of the rainbow. The difference to which we referred in connection with the altar may best be seen by a brief quotation. For the simple words "The LORD smelled a sweet savour," with the following promise of ix. 21, 22, the Babylonian story has "The gods smelt the savour, the gods smelt the sweet savour, the gods

gathered like flies over the sacrifice." One other point of difference we should like to note. The hero of the Babylonian story shuts himself in the ark, but we are told of Noah that "the LORD shut him in."

We once again advise our readers to examine the Biblical and Babylonian stories side by side for themselves, and again they will feel, we are convinced, both that there is an organic connection between the two narratives, and that it seems absolutely incredible that the former can be derived from the latter by any process of pruning, however extensive.

Whatever may be the date of the form of the story discovered by Mr. George Smith (we believe it is ordinarily assigned to the seventh century B.C.), of course the great question is as to the date of the Babylonian Epic itself, and not that of any of the recensions into which it may have branched off. In his "Higher Criticism" and the Monuments," published in 1894, Dr. Sayce thought that it "was probably composed in the age of the literary revival under Khammurabi, who first made Babylon the capital of a united kingdom (2350 B.C.), and it was consequently already ancient in the time of the writer of the Tel-el-Amarna tablets" (p. 113). Since these words were written, however, a recent discovery, first announced to the world at the Oriental Congress at Paris in 1897, gives a much increased definiteness to the matter. The discovery

was made by Father Scheil at Sippara of a tablet containing a part (unfortunately a very small part) of the story, in a fresh recension. The special point of interest is the date. The tablet is definitely dated in the reign of Ammi-Zadougā, fourth in succession after Khammurabi, or Amraphel, that is to say, about 2250 B.C.

But the tablet in question was copied from a much older one, which in part was illegible to the copyist, because here and there a word is inserted meaning "lacuna." Thus we are safe in saying that the date of the exemplar from which Father Scheil's tablet was copied is carried back at least to the Abrahamic age. In dealing with so fragmentary a tablet we must not of course theorise as to how the full story would run; but it is shown that the story itself in some form is carried back into the third millennium before Christ. Those of our readers who may care to know more of the Scheil tablet will find a French translation of it in the *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, vol. xx. p. 53.

Our remaining instance was that of the war of the Four Kings. We have chosen this example because it illustrates in a striking way the change that has been brought about in the background of the picture. When the present writer was a young man, the names of those four kings were just names and nothing more. This can be readily seen on turning

to the four names in the first edition of Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible." The scholars who wrote those articles had absolutely nothing to go upon but the Bible narrative, supplemented by theories as to the etymology of the names, which a fuller knowledge has now shown to be untenable. Yet all this was inevitable. The record stood alone, with absolutely no gleam shining on it from external history. To those who never wavered in their belief that the Bible was the Word of God, and not merely a book from which the Word of God might be extracted, it was a small thing to believe in the historic credibility of the story, even though it had no extraneous support. Could not Scripture history be believed unless every historic statement had its parallel in profane history?

On the other hand, to those who held, in varying degrees, less definite views of the trustworthiness of the Bible record, the absence of an independent knowledge of an historic background was a fact giving rise to suspicions of the historic trustworthiness of the story.

Yet the discoveries of the last few years have transformed this blank into a clear piece of history resting on definite evidence. If we may suggest a homely parallel, it is like the change which middle-aged men will remember from the map of Africa in the atlases they used when they were boys to the map of Africa as used by their children now.

Amraphel has been identified by Assyriological experts, such as Drs. Sayce, Hommel, and Schrader, with the Khammurabi, who, together with Arioch and Tidal, was vassal to the Elamite king Chedor-laomer (Kudur-Lagamar). Subsequently Khammurabi threw off the Elamite yoke and founded a united Babylonian kingdom, with its capital at Babylon.

Those of our readers who wish to know in brief fashion the present state of our knowledge, will find an interesting sketch in Dr. Sayce's "Early History of the Hebrews," pp. 26 *f.* Those who wish for fuller details are referred to Dr. Hommel's "The Ancient Hebrew Tradition, as Illustrated by the Monuments," chap. v. How very wild a dream it would have seemed but a few years ago to have supposed that we should ever be able to read letters from Khammurabi to a vassal (Sin-idinam) in which he mentions Chedor-laomer by name.<sup>1</sup> Now that the four names are shown to be anything but imaginary, one line of attack is gone. No objection can be brought against the story by the assertion that the background is imaginary.

We may call our readers' attention to a curious point here. Many will remember how the assertions

<sup>1</sup> This statement is made on the authority of Dr. Hommel (*op. cit.*, pp. 173 *f.*). It is right to state, however, that the above reading of the name has been challenged (L. W. King, "Letters and Inscriptions of Hammurabi," pp. xxxiv. *f.*).

of the Tübingen school that the Fourth Gospel was a work of the later days of the second century have by the efforts of such theologians as Bishops Lightfoot and Westcott, Dr Sanday, and the late Ezra Abbot, been so beaten back point by point, that from such a date as (say) A.D. 170 those even who deny the Johannine authorship have come to admit a date A.D. 110-115. That battle-field is very quiet now. There is something very like this in the case of Gen. xiv. The late Dr. Kuenen, writing about 1885, maintained that this chapter was "a fragment of a post-Exilian version of Abram's life" (*Hex.* p. 324). The preliminary note in the "Rainbow" Bible says that it "seems to be derived from what might be termed an Exilic Midrash [*i.e.* story]," whilst the writer of the brilliant article on Abraham in the new "Bible Dictionary" (Hastings) suggests that it is perhaps "reproduced" by E "from some separate source." If "reproduced by E," then prior to E, how much we are not told; but this ought to bring us towards the early days of the divided kingdom.

For the evidence which in the course of the last few years the discovery at Tel-el-Amarna has contributed towards assuring those who doubted whether in the story of Melchizedek we have sober history and not romance, reference may be made to Dr. Sayce's "Patriarchal Palestine," pp. 71 *f.*, 173 *f.*, and to his "Early Religion of Israel," p. 28. The mysterious



description of Melchi-zedek in the Epistle to the Hebrews finds its counterpart in the declaration of Ebed-Tob, King of Uru-Salim, or Jerusalem, that his "kingly dignity has not been derived from either father or mother, but from the 'Mighty King'; from the God, that is to say, whose temple stood on the mountain of Jerusalem." [There is still some dispute as to the true transliteration of the King's name, but this is immaterial. We give that of Professor Sayce.]

Our readers might naturally suppose, from our having so long taken the Wellhausen scheme as the basis for our remarks, that this scheme was "criticism's" last word; but though it certainly represents the dominant phase, it is not the latest. To a few remarks on this latest school, one that goes far beyond Wellhausen and his disciples in the conclusions it reaches, the school of MM. d'Eichthal, Vernes, and Havet, we invite our readers' careful attention. In a certain sense they form an object-lesson of supreme importance.

The thought has occurred to many a simple Bible reader, "I cannot profess to understand or to answer the arguments of the 'Higher Critics,' as they claim to resolve the books of Moses into various layers, written at different times, from different standpoints, and with quite different purposes; but certainly the more I read those books in my Bible, the more am I impressed with the unity of purpose pervading

them, the Divine intention ever steadily and unchangingly manifesting itself."

The feeling which refuses to see in the Pentateuch such a heterogeneity as the Wellhausen school would have us believe, is one not confined to mere "traditionalists," as we shall now proceed briefly to show.

Let us once again remind our readers that the keystone of the Wellhausen arch is that there are three strata in the Pentateuch, the "prophetical" Jehovistic document, Deuteronomy, and the Priestly code. The first of these "sanctions a multiplicity of altars," the second "demands" local unity of worship," the third "presupposes that unity, and transfers it, by means of the Tabernacle, to primitive times." Further, Deuteronomy, or rather the great mass of it, is a homogeneous work, whose date can be fixed within very narrow limits, since it is ruled that it was the "Book of the Law," discovered in the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah, and that its composition was not much earlier than its discovery. The date of D being thus fixed, those of JE and P are divided by this central barrier, and must remain one on each side of it.

This was first challenged from the "critical" standpoint about a dozen years ago. It has been seen that, in a sense, Deuteronomy is the key of the position: once destroy the "critical" conclusion as to Deuteronomy, and the whole position is revolu-

tionised. In a work by M. Gustave d'Eichthal, *Mélanges de Critique Biblique* (Paris, 1886), two distinct lines of attack are entered upon. The writer maintained, first, that Deuteronomy was not homogeneous but composite, and secondly, that its date was post-Exilic. We have not seen this work, but we have read carefully a work which discusses its views with great clearness and force, the essay of M. Maurice Vernes, *Une nouvelle Hypothèse sur la composition et l'origine du Deutéronome : Examen des vues de M. G. d'Eichthal* (Paris, 1887). Those of our readers who are strongly interested in the subject may be recommended to read M. Vernes's monograph. It is remarkably clear and incisive, and never leaves us in any doubt as to the author's meaning. After reading it, we were forcibly reminded of a favourite remark of a great Cambridge scholar who passed away a few years ago, made partly, but only partly, in jest:—"You will learn more from a Frenchman when he is wrong, than from a German when he is right!" To a believer, the pre-eminent value of the book lies in this, that it shows, from the standpoint of a writer who is as far removed from a conservative as possible, the deep underlying flaw in the Wellhausen system, its idea of the heterogeneity of the Pentateuch.

The Josian date of Deuteronomy has been dinned into our ears so long, that we rub our eyes with some amaze when we read the statement set forth by

M. d'Eichthal and accepted by M. Vernes: "We believe that this book, if it does not emanate from Ezra the scribe, which we have no means of proving, has at any rate been composed in the interests of the reform instituted by him and Nehemiah together."

To Christians who have objected to being told that Deuteronomy was the outcome of the scheme of a little body of conspirators, who made the king their tool, the answer was vouchsafed that the laws were not all new ones just made, but a redaction of laws many of which were old. On this M. Vernes asks the very pertinent question whether it is conceivable that a simple furbishing of old laws, with merely some new ones thrown in, could have been believed by the men of the time to be a revelation, and practically bring about a revolution (p. 24).

Deuteronomy being now relegated from pre-Exilic to post-Exilic times, *i.e.* from the seventh to the sixth, or, better still, to the fifth century B.C., and it being also assumed that Deuteronomy is earlier in date than the Priestly code, this last must be moved on in the direction of the fourth century B.C.

But now comes a grave question. As long as D was placed just before the Exile, then, since J was assumed to be anterior to D, this earlier stratum was put in the eighth or even ninth century B.C., but at the very latest at the commencement of the seventh century. But once remove the intervening barrier furnished by Deuteronomy, and it may at once be

asked whether anything hinders us from seeing in this oldest section of the Pentateuch the mark even of the times of the Exile and Restoration. Let the answer be given in M. Vernes's own words. He says: "If I were asked, Have you decisive reasons for maintaining that the kernel at any rate of the Jehovistic-prophetic document was composed before the Exile? I should venture to answer humbly, and speaking quite low, I have not" (p. 45).

*All* the strata are now declared to be post-Exilic, and therefore the distinctions drawn by Wellhausen between the three are necessarily denied. We again quote M. Vernes: "Unfortunately these distinctions, in appearance so exact, vanish in matter of fact. The little code called the 'Book of the Covenant' (Exod. xxi.-xxiii.), far from allowing the worship of the Deity in many places, has regard expressly to the single sanctuary of Jerusalem in its rules relating to the threefold annual pilgrimage. [Here xxiii. 14-19 is cited.] The unity of the Sanctuary, the centralisation of worship, are not less formally enjoined here than in Deuteronomy and Leviticus. Here we have the three social conditions all coming to nothing with the three historical epochs they were supposed to represent" (p. 46).

With the whole Pentateuch post-Exilic we cannot be supposed to have a very sure foothold with other parts of the Old Testament. M. Vernes has fully the courage of his opinions: "Neither Samuel, nor

Elijah, nor Elisha, are in my eyes historical personages . . . they are for me creations of the prophetic spirit." And why not, seeing that "the lawyers of the Judæan restoration have produced this astounding figure of the lawgiver Moses, who added the majesty of ten centuries of antiquity to the rules of worship and of social life which they were endeavouring to make their fellow-citizens observe."

With the historical books, needless to say, the pre-Exilic prophets also go overboard. The first part of Isaiah even is of most doubtful authenticity; as for the second part, the idealised figure of Cyrus suits the times after the restoration better than the eve of the return. Even Amos and Hosea must go: "The books at whose heads these names are read, received their actual form in the time of the second temple." It is then summed up that "the prophetic writers, taken as a whole, have the Captivity and the Return to Jerusalem behind them." Again, "it is after the Exile, in our opinion, that the great prophetic inspiration flourished, of which the Books of Isaiah and Jeremiah remain the imperishable memorials, and here we have the writers of those sublime pages, who have created on the other side the figures of a Samuel and of an Elijah."

The board has been swept clear with a merciless thoroughness, and no one can accuse M. Vernes of

any lingering sentiment in favour of the old beliefs. Coming then from such a quarter, the conclusion is strikingly significant. There are doubtless three strata, J E, D, P, but to suppose that these are documents of three distinct epochs, monuments of three different spirits—that, says M. Vernes, I positively deny.

He goes on to tell us that the “traditional” school have minimised the fact of the divergences of the texts, and “convinced of the unity of inspiration of such a book as the Hexateuch, they have thought it proper to seek that unity even in the details.” The “critics,” he holds, make the converse error, because on their theory we should not have one special effort looking to a definite end, but a number of attempts, which would combine together divergent and contradictory works, leading to a mere jumble rather than a legislation (“un capharnaüm plutôt qu’une législation”).

We are bidden to consider what was the intention, the drift, of the editors of the first six books of the Bible. Were they connoisseurs examining their documents in dilettante fashion, more alive to the disadvantage of losing some touch of an ancient chronicle, or some special text of common law, than to that of leading a reader astray by the multiplicity of versions of the same fact and still more by their disagreement? We beg our readers carefully to consider the point raised in these words, which we

have condensed from M. Vernes. Assume for the moment that the Law of Moses is a mere human production, the work of men centuries after the time of Moses. Still, even then, it was the work of the leaders of the nation, with some very definite purpose before them. If the Wellhausen school be right, these leaders were mere antiquarians, piecing together heterogeneous documents in the merest academic style; they could in no sense deserve the name of practical statesmen, importing common sense into their work. M. Vernes contemptuously casts aside the first hypothesis, and adds the obvious conclusion, "They are historians and jurists, who wished to give to their contemporaries a book where they may find at once the sacred history of primitive times, and the Law whose authority they recognise."

No concession to differences between the Eastern and Western mind can explain how the last editors of the Law of Moses could have introduced into their work large pieces of the Jehovistic document or of Deuteronomy, *if they had recognised therein a spirit obviously different from that of the Elohistic-priestly document, which was produced last.* These three documents were in their eyes rival editions of the legislation of the present, which, on account of their importance, their eloquence, the varied teaching which they contained, deserved to be preserved side by side. M. Vernes reminds us, and, *granting the premises common to him and the Wellhausen school, the*



reminder is simply a truism, that all this is very easy of comprehension, "if the last redaction of the Hexateuch is assigned to the third century B.C., and if the principal component documents date from the times immediately preceding." On the other hand, it would be a matter very hard to understand, "if the three great component documents of the Hexateuch represent three markedly distinct phases of the religious and social evolution of the ancient Jews."

Let us add for ourselves, *If the aforesaid premises be granted*, there is vastly greater logical justice in the views of M. Vernes than in those of the Wellhausen school. He realises the folly of supposing that any codifier of laws would combine heterogeneous, nay, rather, contradictory, elements, and then bid the people view it as a homogeneous whole. The task might fairly be urged on Professor Wellhausen, or on some of his English disciples, to take up M. Vernes's challenge. A certain common element is held by both schools; we should be delighted to see the tournament in which, *on those assumptions*, some enthusiasts of the Wellhausen school would enter with M. Vernes. They might do this and then demolish Dr. W. L. Baxter.

We have now sketched to the best of our power the general course of criticism, as applied to the earlier books of the Old Testament up to the present day. And now there is a pre-eminently important

caution on which we cannot lay too great an emphasis. Many careful and thoughtful scholars are disposed to accept a certain amount of the "critical" substructure, who totally rebel against the idea of accepting the portentous superstructure raised thereon.

To illustrate our meaning, we quote a few lines from Dr. F. Watson's admirable essay "The Book Genesis a true History" (why not "Book of Genesis?"). Dr. Watson is prepared to make larger concessions to the new criticism than we are prepared to do ourselves, so that his refusal to concede all the inferences which are made is all the more valuable.

He says, "We accept the critical theory as to the composition of Genesis in its main outlines, *ex animo*; we accept, provisionally and for purposes of argument, the dates they assign to the several narratives; we entirely part company with some of them in regard to their opinion as to the historical value of Genesis" (p. 18). Of course, though only Genesis is named here, the same remarks might be made to apply more or less to the Pentateuch or Hexateuch.

Here, then, are three distinct points:—(1) An *ex animo* acceptance of the "critical" theory in its main outlines, so far as the literary analysis is concerned; (2) an acceptance, provisionally, and for purposes of argument, of the dates currently assigned to the several strata; (3) a rejection of the views put

forward as to the historical value of the resulting compilation.

It will be remembered, of course, that there are "critics" and "critics." It may suffice to give the citations which Dr. Watson (*l.c.*) gives as to Genesis from Wellhausen and from Delitzsch. The former tells us, "We attain [in Genesis] to no historical knowledge of the Patriarchs, but only of the time when the stories about them rose amongst the Israelite people." The latter maintains the "essential truth of the narrative."

To come back now to the three points indicated above, we would venture to put our own view of the matter slightly differently. We would say then, first, that we believe that to a certain extent literary analysis has shown the existence of various elements, but the conclusions are still matters to be viewed with extreme caution, and the minute dissection, by which two halves of a verse, which to the ordinary educated reader seem to cohere perfectly, are assigned to writers centuries apart, is a thing utterly unwarranted. When a particular form of a theory is started and insisted on, so much the worse for the facts is often what we come to. In the second place, in the dates currently assigned to the various strata, we have a matter of the purest subjectivity. Let it be granted for argument's sake that the Pentateuch or Hexateuch consists of J E + D + P, on what grounds is it maintained that each of these is

to be assigned to a certain date? By a series of inferences drawn from certain assumptions, for which assumptions we should like more argumentative support. Take for example the present dominant view, and two of the assumptions which underlie it, (a) that Deuteronomy, or the bulk of it, is a work composed not long before its discovery by Hilkieh, and (b) that the rise of absolute monotheism in Israel is only coeval with the first writing prophets, Amos and Hosea.

We do not propose to go into either of these points here. We would merely, in connection with the first point, suggest to any open-minded man to read Deuteronomy, either the whole of it, or even Wellhausen's "Deuteronomy proper" (cc. xii.-xxvi.), and then ask himself whether it is at all the sort of book we should look for from an Israelite who, on the hypothesis, must have been smarting either under Manasseh's persecution or with the recollection of it. It must also be remembered (and this is a fact of considerable significance) that though the majority of "critics" do assign Deuteronomy to the date named above, yet there are some whose subjectivity (and what is there but subjectivity in the view of the majority?) leads them to other results. We have already seen that M. Vernes makes Deuteronomy a post-Exilic work. On the other hand, the recent work of Pastor Naumann makes in Deuteronomy, an *Ur-Deuteronomium* (cc. xii.-xxvi.),

together with  $E_1$ ,  $E_2$ ,  $E_3$ , and  $E_4$ . He thinks UD and  $E_1$  may be referred to the time of Solomon,  $E_2$  and  $E_3$  to that of the earlier Syrian wars, and  $E_4$  to that of Josiah. We will merely remind our readers that the Josian date of Deuteronomy is one chief key to the Wellhausen position, and it could not be thus shifted, either forward or backward, without the ruin of the fabric.

As regards the argument from monotheism, it is simply to beg the whole question at issue to assert that we have no evidence of absolute monotheism from the Bible before Amos and Hosea. This is happily a matter which any educated reader can test for himself as well as an expert. Such a one produces from his Bible passage after passage which proclaims the truth of the unity of God in the strongest possible terms. For example, he cites this or that Psalm bearing the name of David, and therefore many generations earlier than Amos and Hosea. He is met by the retort that the Psalm is not by David, and that in fact most critics are agreed that there are no Davidic Psalms, or hardly any. But why may not such and such a Psalm be Davidic? our inquirer asks. Because, he is told, it contains monotheistic teaching, and monotheism was not taught in Israel till the time of Amos and Hosea. And so the reasoning in a circle goes round and round. We would once again remark that Dr. James Robertson's "Early Religion of Israel" con-

tains the most cogent treatment of this great subject known to us, and that it will well repay perusal.

As to the particular argument resting on the Psalms, our readers will find some very judicious remarks in Dr. Kirkpatrick's little book on the Psalms, in the Cambridge series. Here we have a writer who, though certainly conservative, is a pre-eminently cautious one. Yet in his remarks, for example, on a cluster of eighteen Psalms bearing the name of David in the superscription (li.—lxv., lxviii.—lxx.), the Davidic date of which is unhesitatingly denied by a majority of modern "critics," it will be noticed that Dr. Kirkpatrick speaks with a cautious reserve which, while fully alive to certain difficulties, realises also how much there is which is subjective in the case against the Davidic authorship, and allows that "some of these Psalms may be original Davidic Psalms, altered perhaps in the process of transmission, or adapted for liturgical use by modifications and additions."

But if any appreciable portion of these Psalms are the work of David, or of the Davidic and immediately succeeding age, the work of writers who sought to dwell on episodes in David's life, it is clear that the ideas of absolute monotheism must have been deeply rooted in Israel long before the days of the earliest writing prophets. In this case the Wellhausen dictum as to the dates falls of necessity at once.

The third of the three points was as to the historical value attached to the earliest books of the Old Testament, as the outcome of the theories as to literary analysis and date. That the "critics" are not all at one on this last point is true enough. How sweepingly and how irreverently Wellhausen casts aside all idea of the historic value of these books we have already shown. Yet we can find this same denial, happily without the irreverence, but still the denial, much nearer home. The "Bampton Lectures" for 1897 show us how the Old Testament fabric is shaken even in the hands of the English disciples of Wellhausen.

On his third point Dr. Watson remarks, "It is our hope to show on critical principles that Wellhausen's estimate (*i.e.* of Genesis) is utterly false." Those who have read Dr. Watson's little book, whether or no they agree with the concessions which he makes, will readily allow that he has shown in a very telling way how immensely strong is the case for the historic truth of the book he discusses. For ourselves, we would heartily echo his words, applying them to the whole Pentateuch.

We unhesitatingly assert our own belief that, in all essential particulars, the historic character of the early record remains unshaken, and we are increasingly convinced that, when the period of unrest is over, the old belief, however modified in details, will, in its fundamentals, be much what it was.

We may pause now for a moment to survey the field and reckon up the amount of havoc that has been wrought. Let our readers allow their minds slowly to glance along the course of the earlier history, and think of the names which more than fifty generations of Christians believed to be those of men and women whose histories God had caused to be written for the guidance and instruction of His Church. Nay more than this. Christians have believed that they have full warrant for their confidence in the direct teaching of the Saviour Himself and His Apostles. It is true that there seem to be cases which may be merely instances of a sort of conventional use, and so must not be unduly pressed ; but that Christ stamped the authority of the Old Testament Scriptures with His own impress can only be denied by denying the historic credibility of the Gospels themselves.

Glance through some of the leading names, and, for the present, pass over the earliest : What of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Joseph ? Have we, and our fathers for centuries before us, been mistaken in teaching the stories circling round these names as real history ? How often has it been said that England's greatness has been bound up with, and is largely due to, her love of the Bible, so that such stories as, for example, those of Abraham offering up Isaac, Eliezer's meeting with Rebekah at the well, the sale of Joseph into



Egypt, his meeting once again with his brothers, and the like, are wrought into the very fibres of English hearts, almost more familiarly than any scenes in our own English history.

Has it been a delusion, then, after all? Are all these but old wives' fables? Truly it is so, if the latter-day "critics" be right. Those ancient personages we have named above are simply mythical, and we must leave it to the keen discriminating eye of the "critic" to see what tiny grain of history there is, if any, which lies in the myth. Indeed "mythical" is not a sufficiently decisive word for the purpose. Some history may underlie a myth; but Abraham, so we are told by the chief among the new theorists, is "a free creation of unconscious art."

What more touching scenes in Genesis than Jacob's passionate grief for the supposed death of Joseph, his reception of the news that his son was alive, and their meeting in Egypt? Yet a "critic" has been found to deny that the Israelites ever were in Egypt.

Genesis is thus thrown overboard. For the future we must put it on the same shelf with Livy's stories of the Kings of Rome, or the Arthurian legends.

The other four books of the Pentateuch, representing the Mosaic age, will perhaps have a better fate. By no means. Let us remember Dr. Duhm's dictum, "At one stroke the Mosaic period is wiped out." It is true that the Bible history does in a way, we are told,

begin with the Mosaic age; but that is not equivalent to saying that the stories of that age are in any large degree historic: we are to extract what grains of history we can from the poetic fancies of J E, all else is but the dishonest fabrications of P. While, then, it is not maintained that Moses is a purely imaginary person (though on this point we would direct our readers' attention to the words of M. Vernes cited above), yet we must be content to allow that most of what we are told about him is legend, and, when not legend, deliberate fraud.

If our readers, then, wish to read their Bible in the light of the new "criticism," they must start with certain admissions. The Tabernacle and its furniture, so minutely dwelt upon in Exodus, not only never had any existence, but the writer, or writers, who so described it knew that it never had any existence, while wishing their countrymen to believe the lie.

Our readers can ascertain by referring to our analysis in an earlier chapter how much remains of what may roughly be called the Mosaic system when P has been eliminated. Then let them remember the date assigned to P by the "critics," and the aim and purpose of P. Then let them read the Pentateuch once again, and ask themselves what amount of the Divine still seems left in it. The wondrous figure of Abraham, which seemed so near and so vivid, has melted away into thin air; the equally wondrous figure of Moses does indeed still remain

in a shadowy way, but his chief use is that of a sort of framework on which to hang a mass of details, partly legends, partly frauds. The mighty Lawgiver, who, we have been bidden to believe—ay, and, thank God, we do believe—stood face to face with the glorified Saviour on the Mount of Transfiguration, is now a man whose very existence is doubted by some, whose history is largely branded as a lie by others.

We are told, further, that the study of comparative theology is demonstrating that much of what we had been led to believe lay at the very root of Israel's religious history was simply usage common to Israel and the surrounding nations. Thus we were taught that circumcision was a rite indicative of the covenant which God made with Abraham and his seed. Now we are told that there was nothing specially Israelite about it, and that the practice was one common to the Shemitic nations generally, and indeed to others. But what of that? Does the fact that the rite, or rather the practice, was one followed by other nations also, preclude us from believing that God chose it as the seal of the Covenant? Do we hesitate to believe that our Lord established the Christian rite of Holy Baptism because the usage was one previously practised by Jews in the case of proselytes? Surely no. We have simply the elevation and hallowing of an old rite rather than the creation of a new one.

Yet more is threatened, more is at stake in all this, than the position of certain venerable figures in a far distant epoch of sacred history. In what sense can men, if the neo-critical conclusions be accepted, continue to view the Old Testament as a whole as containing the gradually unfolding scheme of God's purposes, as a work which, amid all the surface variety of its contents, was dominated by a supreme unity in which all looked on to the

“One Divine event  
To which the whole creation moved.”

Yet this was plainly taught by the Saviour to His Apostles and to His Church for ever. It was the Saviour triumphant over death, Who, “beginning at Moses and all the prophets, expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” Would defenders of the kenotic theory in its crudest form maintain that the glorified Saviour who made the claim “all power is given unto Me in Heaven and in Earth,” can have been under any cloud of fallibility then ? It must remain then, that, for all who claim the title of Christian, unless the Gospel is cast aside as an untrustworthy record, Moses, as well as the prophets, did speak of Christ. There is no escape from that result, save by denying the credibility of the Gospel or rebelling against the ruling of Christ.

## CHAPTER VI

### EFFECT OF THE NEW "CRITICISM" ON THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE remark has more than once been made in our hearing, "After all, these new theories, whatever may be the amount of truth in them, only affect the Old Testament. Even though a good deal of our old-fashioned beliefs as to the credibility of the Old Testament story should have to be modified, or even given up, still there remains the New Testament, the glorious Gospel of Christ: that is absolute and eternal truth." So, in like strain, we have sometimes heard the Old Testament compared to the scaffolding which is necessary for the construction of a permanent building. When once the building is finished there is no need to retain the scaffolding, and it may as well be cleared away, so as to allow the building to be seen by all men. Now while it is true that, when the perfect reality has come, that which was but a shadow of good things passes into the background, as having served its purpose—still, nothing can well be more false than to hold that since by a "new covenant" the first is made "old," therefore that old covenant was devoid of real and

abiding truth. We believe, on the contrary, that it was Divinely appointed as a preparation for the fuller Light, till that Light should come ; but that, until that Light came, it was God's appointed means of education.

We may take our stand on the words of the Seventh Article, "The Old Testament is not contrary to the New : for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to Mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and Man, being both God and Man. Wherefore they are not to be heard, which feign that the old Fathers did look only for transitory promises." Here too let it be remembered that this declaration of our Church is not only fully corroborated by the constant teaching of the New Testament, but by the most express declarations of the Lord Himself. "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me." We enunciate, then, a truth, as patent as it is weighty, when we say, The New Testament presupposes the Old ; the two Testaments are linked and clamped together in a thousand ways, so indissolubly blent that one cannot be torn from the other without irreparable hurt. That great truth which Augustine proclaimed is the underlying basis of the Christian religion, "The New Testament is presupposed in the Old, the Old Testament shines forth in the New."

It is plain that to work out in detail any one of

the numerous lines of thought opened out by this truth would be to embark on a volume. We can merely hope to indicate, in two or three brief sketches, how much is involved in this connection.

And first, what of Messianic prophecies? Christian men have believed, and have taught their children for generations, that in the Old Testament, and even in the Pentateuch, are a series of prophecies concerning the future redemption of our race, and Him by whom it should be wrought; prophecies ranging from the general promise to the fuller and richer details as the light in the horizon broadened to the fuller day. The promises were indeed given at sundry times and in divers manners, but Christian men believed that they saw the message gradually shaping itself through the ages. Is all this then only a delusion? Have a body of "critics" in the end of the ages found that the Christian Church from its earliest dawn has been but the victim of a poetic dream?

We may now give a very brief survey of the Messianic promises which the Pentateuch yields us. We notice first how in the very heart of the story of the Fall we have the promise of Redemption; amid the words of doom pronounced on the serpent comes the promise of the triumphant Son of Man (Gen. iii. 15).<sup>1</sup> The reliance we should put in the

<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to refer to this wondrous promise and refrain from amazement that the Roman Church can still persist in giving,

promise, however, would be a good deal shaken if we accepted the verdict of the "critics" that the passage before us is merely part of the earlier stratum of J (J<sup>1</sup>) due to about 850 B.C.

Our second instance is one to which some exception may be taken on the ground of interpretation. So far the promise does not define the Deliverer more specially than as Son of Man: in Gen. ix. 27, on one view of the interpretation, the Deliverer is connected with the race of Shem. The words of Noah's blessing are "May God enlarge Japheth [this is a play on the name Japheth], and may He dwell in the tents of Shem." Who is the grammatical subject to "dwell"? is it God, or Japheth? Assuming for a moment the former view to be correct, a prophecy stands out before us, verified by long centuries of history:—the Japhetite race is plainly, as the ages roll on, moving onwards to empire over the whole world; it was from the race of Shem that the chosen people sprang, and the Christ after the flesh was born.

As between the two interpretations we merely propose to remark that either is an admissible rendering of the Hebrew; though we would venture to say that if the passage were, not a familiar verse

in all Bibles sanctioned by her, the rendering, "She shall bruise thy head in pieces and thou shalt lye in waite" (Douay Bible, 1609), as alike false to theology and to the undoubted meaning of the Hebrew. So much the worse for the Hebrew, Roman authorities will say.



of the Bible, but a newly discovered fragment of a Hebrew MS., the natural *primâ facie* way of understanding the clause would be to take "God" as the subject to both verbs. It is true that a majority of modern scholars hold "Japheth" to be the nominative, but the former view was widely held in ancient times.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the Hebrew verb here rendered "dwell" (*shachan*) is that from which is derived the term *Shechinah*, the regular word for the manifestation of God's Majesty in Israel. As in the preceding case, we are bidden to view this passage as a portion of J<sup>1</sup>.

Then, in the line of Shem, a fresh limitation takes place, and Abraham is called and the promise given to him "in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. xii. 3). Gladly would one have treasured these words as the sure record of God's promise to the Father of the faithful, carefully handed down by the reverent hands of many generations. But no; we owe them to J<sup>2</sup>, a later

<sup>1</sup> Thus, of the only four ancient versions taken directly from the Hebrew, three, the LXX., Vulgate, and Peshito Syriac, give renderings which, from their literalness, slightly reproduce the indeterminateness of the Hebrew. Still, we think that the *primâ facie* impression from all these would be to take "God" as the subject of both verbs. Take the Vulgate, for example: "Dilatet Deus Japheth et habitet in tabernaculis Sem." Philo, whose Bible was the LXX., so understands the Greek, though he introduces the other view with a doubtful "perhaps" (*Liber de Sobrietate*, c. 13). The remaining version, the Targum of Onkelos, is more explicit: "The Lord shall enlarge Japheth, and shall make his Shechinah to dwell in the tabernacle of Shem."

stratum of J<sup>1</sup> due to about 650 B.C. Again and again the limits are drawn closer. With the promise that Isaac shall be born is the further promise, "I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him" (xvii. 19). This, however, is the work of P, the Exilic fabricator; and even the renewed promise, "in Isaac shall thy seed be called" (xxi. 12), is only due to E, the Ephraimite collector of legends. St. Paul indeed evidently believed the words to be a Divine promise (Rom. ix. 7), but we are afraid that, to the advanced "critic," St. Paul's authority would hardly be accepted as conclusive. A third time is the promise vouchsafed in connection with Isaac just after the offering on Mount Moriah, but this is merely a "redactional addition" due to the editor who blended J and E in the later days of the monarchy.

In the next generation God's fixing of the chosen line is indicated, before the birth of the twins, in the words "the elder shall serve the younger" (xxv. 23), a remark, we are told, of the later Jehovist (J<sup>2</sup>). Here again we may notice St. Paul's words (Rom. ix. 10-13). This pre-natal sign was confirmed on two subsequent occasions, once in the vision at Beth-El (Gen. xxviii. 14), and once at the bestowal of the name of Israel (Gen. xxxii. 28). We have to be content to assign both these to J<sup>2</sup>.

Were the *history* in Genesis all we had to guide us, we might have thought that the son who should

carry on the mysterious line of blessing would be the noble Joseph, but even Genesis teaches us that it is not so, it is on Judah that this dignity is to fall. We do not propose to discuss the much vexed question of the etymology of the word *Shiloh* (Gen. xlix. 10), but would merely point out that nearly all (perhaps quite all) ancient witnesses assumed the passage to be a promise of the Messiah who should spring from the tribe of Judah. The rival rendering (that given in the margin of the Revised Version) was, it would seem, first suggested in the eighteenth century, and besides this fact, which is a very significant one, the rendering is to our mind far from satisfactory. We cannot believe that such pre-eminence as Judah possessed in the wilderness would be denoted by so strong a word as "sceptre." We have believed and we do believe that, in this utterance, Jacob was, consciously or unconsciously, expressing the Divine purpose. Yet all this falls to the ground, if "critics" are right in referring it to the Jehovist (J<sup>1</sup>).

We have thus seen a gradual narrowing and defining of our limits, until at last all centres in one special tribe. Nothing indeed is taught yet as to the personality of the Messiah, save that He is to triumph over evil, and be a source of blessing to His people; what we are told is whence He is to come. The next prophecy in point of time is different to the preceding; it is that of Balaam, who,

against his own will and to his own condemnation, like Caiaphas long centuries after, as Bishop Westcott reminds us, declared "there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall arise out of Israel" (Num. xxiv. 17), pointing to the future triumph of One hereafter to spring from Israel, and, it would seem, connecting the scene of it with Palestine. The "critics" seem rather to be at sea as to the whole of this passage (cc. xxiii., xxiv.); some refer them to J, some to E, and some to the "redactor" who put the two together.

In the remaining Messianic prophecy which the Pentateuch yields us, we have an important point brought out for the first time. Moses looks forward to the Prophet whom God will raise up after him (Deut. xviii. 15, 18 *f.*). This declaration, St. Peter (Acts iii. 22) and St. Stephen, a man "full of the Holy Ghost," plainly referred to Christ. He who was to come was to be a great Teacher, speaking for God, declaring His Will. Moses' view of the prophet was doubtless bounded by a comparatively narrow horizon, but we believe that we have the fullest warrant for explaining his words as receiving their supreme fulfilment in Christ. Possibly, indeed not improbably, the reference need not be restricted to Christ, and we may suppose a succession of prophets to be intended. Yet, we doubt not, those words of Moses, "unto Him ye shall hearken," were but a foreshadowing of that Divine declaration,

"This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." Still, one would sadly ask, can there be much use in discussing the reference of the prophecy, if after all Deuteronomy is but a fabrication, a pious (or, impious) fraud of well-intentioned priests in the time of Manasseh or Josiah?

Into the later prophecies, which picture the Messianic king of David's line, which bring before us, as the Gospels teach us, the various fundamental truths concerning the Messiah, His birth from a Virgin, the place of His birth, His Passion, Death, and Resurrection, we do not here enter; for such a discussion would take us away from our present subject; and, be it remembered, many a critic who will refuse to see any reference, *e.g.* to the birth of Christ in Isa. vii. 14, or to the return of Mary and the Holy Child from Egypt in Hos. xi. 1, will yet not deny that Isaiah was actually the author of the former passage, and Hosea of the latter. That is to say, these are really cases of interpretation, where, for those who accept the authority of the Gospels, one interpretation is ruled past appeal.

There is a good deal more than this, however, in the passages which we have just been considering. According to the old traditional belief, we have in the Pentateuch a series of prophecies, referring with greater and greater definiteness to the coming source of blessing as the ages roll on, and showing a steady

and continuous development. All this at once falls to pieces if the Pentateuch—instead of being a work, where one human mind guided by the Holy Spirit, has been, save in so far as we allow various secondary agencies, the shaper and organiser of the whole, looking on steadily to one end throughout—is on the contrary a mere jumble of fragments, by various writers, of various dates, of *totally different aims*, of no authority save a self-claimed one, with two of the strata confessedly fabrications, concocted for the purpose of the fabricators, and making the freest, but unauthorised use of the Most Holy Name.

The one point we would urge then before passing on to the next topic is this. Grant, if you will, that the neo-critical theory as to the Pentateuch, as set forth by Wellhausen and his disciples, is right and that the old belief is wrong. In that case, it is folly to talk of the developing Messianic prophecies of the Pentateuch ; they must obviously be given up. No price is too high to pay for truth doubtless ; but, without too curiously asking again, whether truth is the ware we should be acquiring on this occasion, there can at any rate be no doubt as to the price we must pay.

We may now briefly take up another question, that of the Old Testament types. The fact that the doctrine of types has been pushed to undue lengths, that mysticism has seen in every matter-of-fact

statement of Old Testament history some underlying spiritual teaching, is no argument against the legitimate use of the doctrine. We may smile at the mystic interpretations of the Jewish Rabbis, or at those of sundry Christian Fathers, but we have the clearest warrant for holding that Old Testament personages and facts are foreshadowings of elements of the Christian revelation.

To make first a remark of a general kind, we would say that throughout the New Testament we find the Apostles and Evangelists constantly appealing to this or that saying of the prophets as distinctly referring to Christ, as the antitype of a series of types; as though in fact the Old Dispensation as a whole were in this sense distinctly "typical." Thus, for example, St. Matthew sees in Hosea's words referring to the Exodus from Egypt, "out of Egypt have I called my son" (Hos. xi. 1; Matt. ii. 15), a prophetic looking on to the return of the Virgin with the Holy Child after the Flight into Egypt. True it is that Hosea goes on to dwell on the subsequent disobedience of Israel, but the type being human was *necessarily* imperfect and sinful.

Of course we can readily see, in the course of the Old Testament story, numerous characters and incidents where, as we read our New Testament knowledge into the Old, we can well believe that we are authorised to see a foreshadowing of the Saviour,

and where the holy men, who looked upon the promises from afar off, may by God's blessing have learnt like lessons for their instruction and comfort. May not the death of Abel, the just slain by the unjust, prefigure the death of Christ; or Isaac, offered up on Moriah, be a type of the Great Offering on Calvary; or Joseph, steadfast against temptation, of Him who was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin; or Joshua, the Captain of Israel as they sought the promised rest, of Him who is the Captain of our salvation?

Such instances could be largely multiplied, but it may be objected that we have no right to let our imaginations crystallise into supposed definite realities. We will therefore confine ourselves simply to those cases where there is direct Scripture warrant for the statement.

"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." The shedding of the blood of the paschal lamb is the most distinct foreshadowing of the shedding of the blood of the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world; and, as if to bring it doubly home to us, our Lord, the Lamb of God, died at the time appointed for the killing of the passover. It is unnecessary to enter into details here, for how close and minute is the parallelism is plain to any reader of the Gospels. How completely the primitive Church embraced the idea is shown by the way in which the word *Pascha* (Hebrew, *pesach*) was adopted by



the entire Christian Church to indicate the time when the supreme sacrifice received its consummation.<sup>1</sup>

The story of the institution of the passover is brought before us in Exod. xii., with the rules for its future observance, and the sacred symbol of the blood, sprinkled on the lintel and the side-posts of the doors, a pledge that "the LORD will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto the houses to smite." So, too, is the Blood of a Higher Victim than the lambs of the passover the warrant of a protection against our deadly foes. Type and antitype are firmly linked together.

We can fully allow that in the regulations as to the passover a double strand is visible, and that the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of the Passover are two distinct factors which are blended into one Festival; indeed the Bible expressly tells us so. This, however, is not the point now, nor does it matter. In the great Christian Festival of the Epiphany several quite distinct thoughts are present, yet a common bond welds them into an harmonious whole. The only point for us now is this, Are we to believe, have we plain Scripture warrant for believing, that the Passover was intended as a foreshadowing, a sacred object-lesson, of the Great Sacrifice? We unhesitatingly avow our belief that it was.

<sup>1</sup> It is worth noting that in Greek, the word *πάσχα*, with qualifying adjectives, is used to indicate both the Saviour's Crucifixion and His Resurrection.

It is rather a grim commentary on this to read Wellhausen's remarks on the subject. The *pesach* simply "points back to the sacrifice of the firstlings," it is a natural festival for a pastoral people. "Because Pharaoh refuses to allow the Hebrews to offer to their God the firstlings of cattle that are His due, Jehovah seizes from him the firstborn of men. Thus the Exodus is not the occasion of the festival, but the festival the occasion, if only a pretended one, of the Exodus. . . . The only view sanctioned by the nature of the case is that the Israelite custom of offering the firstlings gave rise to the narrative of the slaying of the firstborn of Egypt; unless the custom be presupposed the story is inexplicable, and the peculiar selection of its victims by the plague is left without a motive" (*Proleg.*, p. 88). In other words, the story, as we have it in Exod. xii., is simply a fabrication. Surely if we accept such a result, we must reconsider our views of the value of the New Testament testimony to it.

Our Lord bases some very solemn teaching on the giving of the manna in the wilderness (John vi. 32 *f.*, 47-51). The manna was a foreshadowing of the very Bread of Life. Our Saviour must have been conversant from His childhood with the story of the giving of the manna; He evidently assumed it to be absolutely true, and took it as a basis for His teaching. The fullest account we have of the manna in Scripture is in Exod. xvi. 14-36, though there are

brief references in Num. xi. 6-9, Deut. viii. 3, 16. But, in the Exodus passage, we are told that vv. 6-24, 31-36, are due to P (the intervening verses 25-30 being ascribed to J), and the value, as a trustworthy record, of P, on the "critical" hypothesis, our readers already know.

Let us take a second instance from the history of Israel in the wilderness. Our Saviour refers to the Brazen Serpent, and the healing of which it was the pledge and token, as foreshadowing Himself and the salvation wrought by Him: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" John iii. 14, 15). These words of His are followed (ver. 16) by what is perhaps the most solemn and the most touching declaration of the truth of the doctrine of the Atonement. Our Saviour clearly takes as absolute truth the story of the Brazen Serpent, the historic fact and the supernatural element behind it. The story is contained in Num. xxi. 8, 9, and is, we are told, due to J E.

Our readers may remember Wellhausen's rulings about J E. We will remind them of his words. J E, then, is simply legend. "The original motive of the legend, however, . . . appears in the Jehovist always and everywhere covered over with the many-coloured robe of fancy." Again, "Miracles, angels, theophanies, dreams, are never absent from the palette."

In one case "we have a story based upon a vulgar superstition"; in another we have "purely mythical elements"; in another we have "quite the flavour of a popular jest"; and so on (*op. cit.*, p. 326). Some writers have tried to "rationalise" the story and find an historic germ, while eliminating the supernatural; on the above view historic credibility and the supernatural alike disappear.

Let one more illustration of this kind suffice us. There is, we think, no part of the Jewish ritual which appeals to the heart of the Christian believer as a foreshadowing of Him who was to come, as the entrance of the High Priest into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement. On that day he passed alone within the veil "not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people." So, too, our great High Priest; "not by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. ix. 7 *f.*; *cf.* Lev. xvi. The whole of both chapters should be carefully studied and compared; indeed the chapter of the Epistle is simply a commentary on that of Leviticus). To a believer, the typical character of the rites of the Day of Atonement, sanctioned as this is by the inspired words of the Epistle, appeals in the strongest way.

Yet Wellhausen tells us that the Day of Atonement was not known before the Exile, that it is, in

fact, one of the creations of the fabricator of the Priestly code.<sup>1</sup> As we cannot suppose a superstructure of truth to be erected on a foundation permeated by fraud, this would mean surrendering the typical teaching of the Day of Atonement as referring to the Saviour, and also our belief in the inspiration of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

We repeat the remark we started with. No exaggeration of the doctrine of types can do away with the fact that the New Testament is, within limits, committed to the truth of the doctrine, and that the Saviour Himself has put His seal to certain cases. Christ and His Apostles taught that certain facts, as they and their hearers believed them to be, were, and were meant to be, foreshadowings of the good things to come. But what is the logical outcome of all this, if some of the supposed facts are legends and some are fabrications?

It is all-important to urge strongly the indissoluble nature of the two Testaments, so that we must see in the two one perfect record. Let us very briefly recur to a point we referred to above, the way in which the New Testament writers see in prophecy after prophecy of the Old Testament plain

<sup>1</sup> Some of Wellhausen's English disciples have shrunk from going to this extreme, and have suggested that in Lev. xvi., as in other parts of P, we have older documents developed; a concession which surely opens the door to very wide possibilities. We will take this opportunity of calling attention to Dr. Baxter's incisive remarks on the subject.—*Sanctuary and Sacrifice*, pp. 357f.

and undoubted reference to the Christ that was to be. A reader is at liberty, if he will, to say that they were mistaken in such an idea, but then in that case let him have the courage of his opinions and carry out the thought to its plain logical result. If these references are not to the Christ, if the prophets have merely regard to events passing before their own eyes, and if the immediate historical reference were all, if in a word the only reasonable line of interpretation of the Old Testament is the purely naturalistic one, then the view we must take of the weight to be attached to the New Testament writings will want very gravely reconsidering. In fact, it will then be for the "Higher Critics" to pass on, and say how much of the New Testament is worth preserving.

It is worth while devoting a few lines to an outline of some important truths about the Saviour, where the New Testament writer appeals for the authority for his statement to an Old Testament writer. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, when speaking of the Incarnation of the pre-existent Christ (the words, "when He entereth into the world," clearly assume His pre-existence), appeals to the fortieth Psalm, where, as Bishop Westcott reminds us, "the words of the Psalmist are ideally the words of the Christ, and they are not past only, but present." He "recognises in . . . His Body the one fitting means for rendering service to God" (Heb. x. 5 *f.*, *cf.* Ps. xl. 6 *f.*). Moreover, the Being thus incarnated was

not merely pre-existent, but the Son of God. So at any rate the writer of this Epistle thought he had grounds for maintaining, on the authority of certain Old Testament passages (see *e.g.* Heb. i. 5, v. 5, *cf.* Ps. ii. 7 ; i. 8, *cf.* Ps. xlv. 6, 7 ; i. 13, *cf.* Ps. cx. 1).

The words of Isaiah were believed to set forth the truth of the supernatural Virgin-Birth (Isa. vii. 14, *cf.* Matt. i. 23), as those of Micah the place where He should be born (Mic. v. 2, *cf.* Matt. ii. 6). It was believed by the Evangelist that Jeremiah referred to the Massacre of the Innocents (Jer. xxxi. 15, *cf.* Matt. ii. 18), and Hosea to the return after the Flight into Egypt (Hos. xi. 1, *cf.* Matt. ii. 15).

The Evangelists believed that Isaiah spoke of John the Baptist as the Forerunner of Christ, and St. John declared this of Himself (Matt. iii. 3, Mark i. 2, Luke iii. 4, John i. 23 ; *cf.* Isa. xl. 3). The Saviour's missionary work in Galilee was to St. Matthew's mind the fulfilment of Isaiah's words, "the people which sat in darkness saw great light" (Isa. ix. 1, 2 ; Matt. iv. 16).

Passing on to the conclusion of our Lord's life on earth, we find that St. Matthew and St. John see in Zech. ix. 9 a reference to the Saviour's triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Matt. xxi. 5, John xii. 5), and that St. Matthew (xxvii. 9) finds in Zech. xi. 12, 13,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> We do not propose here to enter at all into a discussion of the difficulty hingeing on the mention of "Jeremiah." It is sufficient to say that the force of the appeal is entirely unconnected with any mention of a specific name.

a reference to the price of the betrayal. St. John (xix. 24) sees in Psalm xxii. 18 a prophecy of the soldiers casting lots for the Saviour's garments, and, in verses 16, 17, of that Psalm, a prophecy of the piercing of the Saviour's side. In the order as to the paschal lamb, "a bone of him shall not be broken" (Ex. xii. 46, Num. ix. 12), St. John (xix. 36) sees a foreshadowing of an actual fact of the Crucifixion.

On the day of Pentecost, when the Apostles "were all filled with the Holy Ghost," St. Peter, having referred to Joel as foretelling the outpouring of the Spirit in the last days (Joel ii. 28 *f.*, Acts ii. 16 *f.*), tells his hearers that Psalm xvi. is an absolute prophecy of the Resurrection of Christ, and Psalm cx. of the Ascension. St. Paul, too, sees a declaration of the Ascension in Psalm lxviii. 18. The truth of the Eternal High-Priesthood of the Ascended Christ, so emphatically taught by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, is made by that writer to rest ultimately on the words of Psalm cx., "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

The above can be largely added to, but they will suffice for our purpose. The question we wish our readers to ask themselves now is not, How far do you believe that in this or that Old Testament passage there is a definite prophetic reference to some detail in Christ's life on earth? but, How must you change your old views of the authority and value of the New Testament itself, if these appeals are unwarranted? If the authorities to



which the New Testament writers appeal are no authorities, then the books which make that appeal can no longer be considered to be exempt from human judgment all along the line. We then no longer read the New Testament as the Oracles of God, we sit in judgment on it to settle how far we can agree with its teaching. Let our readers do this, if they must, but do not let them delude themselves into thinking that they may accept all the vagaries of neo-criticism as to the Old Testament, and then declare that, as regards the New Testament, the matter stands exactly where it did.

We now come to the concluding thoughts we wish to bring before our readers, and we invite their careful consideration of them. There are students of Scripture who are ready to make what are held to be due concessions to the spirit of the age, as they think, in maintaining that the Apostles and Evangelists not merely displayed the characteristics of their age and nation and temperament and education, but that they were not guarded by their inspiration from inerrancy, not only in their statements of fact, but in their direct teaching. Yet most, perhaps, of such readers, when they come to the *ipsissima verba* of Christ in the Gospels, feel that here they are on sacred ground. Save in so far as there may be a doubt as to the exact meaning of the words, few will be found to deny that the ruling is one past all challenge.

We pass by, then, mere allusions, and anything that may be called conventional phrases, and confine ourselves to direct statements by our Lord as to the Old Testament. Take first His words in the Sermon on the Mount: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. v. 17, 18). These are startling words if read in connection with the theory of Wellhausen and his disciples. A book partly legend, partly dishonest legend, fabrications for a purpose, with history which is not history, with a Levitical code made a thousand years after the time of Moses, with a Deuteronomic code made up partly of "ancient laws adapted to present purposes," and partly of "perfectly new ones framed in the spirit of Moses"—can such a book as this be one to which the Son of God puts the solemn declaration given above? It seems to us that the alternatives before the reader are definite enough. It is not the Holy Scriptures which are being challenged, it is the authority of the teaching of our Lord Himself. What is there for the believer but to say, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Again, to come more to details, the Saviour constantly teaches that the Old Testament Scriptures prophesied of Him. He says of them "They are they

which testify of Me" (John v. 39). After reading the prophetic lection in the synagogue at Nazareth, He declares (Luke iv. 18) that those words of Isaiah (lxi. 1 *f.*) are "this day fulfilled in their ears." Not long before His Passion, He tells the twelve, "all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished" (Luke xviii. 31). At the close of the Last Supper, before the Lord and His disciples went to the Mount of Olives, He used these words, "I say unto you, that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me, And He was reckoned with transgressors; for that which concerneth Me hath fulfilment" (Luke xxii. 37 in R.V.; *cf.* Isa. liii. 12). Later on, when the little band drew near to Gethsemane, the Saviour appealed to the ancient prophecy which foretold His desertion by all His followers (Zech. xiii. 7; Mark xiv. 27).

But let us look on beyond the Passion and Death and Resurrection, and view the Risen Christ, now triumphant over death, as He walks with the two disciples towards Emmaus. Is there any change now in the previous high tone as to the ancient Scriptures? Surely no. He upbraids the two despondent disciples with their folly and slowness of heart in not "believing all that the prophets have spoken" (Luke xxiv. 25). It is important to observe that the Saviour not merely teaches these disciples the truth, but upbraids them for not having recognised the truth. For them the lesson taught by

Moses and the prophets should have been plain ; men were meant by God's grace to see Christ set forth therein. We read (ver. 27), "and beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself," even as afterwards, when addressing the eleven disciples, He says (ver. 44), "All things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me." Will it be held that any form of the kenotic theory avails here ? Can it be that the Christ, who a few short weeks afterwards made the claim "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth," was but fallible ? God be thanked, No.

Let it be granted, if you will, that the word "Moses" in the last two passages has a certain conventional sense ; still, even so, "Moses" is a synonym for the Pentateuch. The question of the authorship of the Pentateuch is a matter of much less moment than that of its credibility. For this the Saviour's words give a warrant with which a Christian may be content.

We may now notice some details in the Pentateuch, for the historic truth of which our Saviour vouches. Noah is an historic personage (Matt. xxiv. 37 *f.*, Luke xvii. 26 *f.*), although the story of the Flood in Genesis is merely a conglomerate of J and P. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is referred to several times by Him, and Lot and his

wife are spoken of as real persons. The "critics" tell us that the story of the deliverance of Lot in Gen. xix. is the work of J, or, more strictly, of J<sup>2</sup> (*circa* 650 B.C.), though ver. 26 is due to E (according to some, not including Wellhausen), and ver. 29 to P.

Our readers will remember that Abraham was spoken of by Wellhausen as "a free creation of unconscious art." Yet our Lord plainly declares the personality of Abraham (see Matt. viii. 11, but especially John viii. 56). What of those words "your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it and was glad"? If Abraham be altogether unreal, what of the authority of Christ's words? Moses too is a real person, although the extreme wing of recent "critics" make him a creation of post-Exilic times (Vernes, *op. cit.*, p. 48), together with Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha. Yet, to believers, the Transfiguration itself is evidence of the personality of two of these (see also Luke iv. 25-27, John v. 45). In connection with Moses, we are reminded of the reference to the Shewbread (Matt. xii. 4, Mark ii. 26), where the Saviour recognises the validity of the Mosaic regulations (Ex. xxv. 30; Lev. viii. 31, xxiv. 5 *f.*) All of the foregoing passages are due to P, to which we are to attach as much, or as little, weight as we please. Of the reference to the Brazen Serpent (John iii. 14) we have already spoken.

Our last reference to the Pentateuch is one very

often dwelt on, but none the less a fact of striking significance. Thrice does the Saviour in His temptation repel the subtle suggestions of the Evil One by appealing to Scripture; each time is that appeal made to the Book of Deuteronomy (viii. 8, vi. 16, x. 20). It is to our mind inconceivable that such appeals should have been made to that book if the new theory of it be true. Will the Christian who believes that Christ is the very Alpha and Omega of the Old Testament, maintain that this book, so dignified, was but a fabrication, a dishonest forgery ?

We do not intend to do more than briefly allude to the cases where our Lord specifically refers to points in Old Testament books outside the Pentateuch, because it is in this last that the problem is crucial. We will merely point out that the Saviour declares that there is a reference to the mission of John the Baptist in the words of Malachi (iii. 1; *cf.* Matt. xi. 10, xvii. 12, Luke vii. 27), where, be it noted, He uses His authority to alter the wording of the prophecy, saying "before thy face." He teaches that the men of His own time are plainly referred to by Isaiah (Matt. xiii. 14, Isa. vi. 9; Matt. xv. 7, Isa. xxix. 13). He treats the story of Jonah as historic, and as having a prophetic reference to Himself (Matt. xii. 39-41), and refers (Matt. xxiv. 15, Mark xiii. 14) to the book of "Daniel the prophet," as containing a reference to a fact yet future when He spoke to His

disciples (ix. 27, xii. 11). Yet a large number of "critics" are perfectly sure that the Book of Daniel is a composition of the age of the Maccabees. Therefore the apparent prophecies for the period between Daniel and the Maccabees are simply *vaticinia post eventum*, designed to throw dust in the eyes of readers. Are we then to suppose that the earlier part of the prophecies are fabrications, since the "critics" tell us so, while yet the later part contains undoubted prophecy, as we have the highest authority of all for believing?

The only other instance that we shall refer to is our Saviour's appeal to Psalm cx. (Matt. xxii. 43, Mark xii. 36, Luke xx. 41). We cite the passage as given by St. Mark, "David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord . . ." (Ps. cx. 1). Our Lord thus distinctly states that Psalm cx. is Davidic and that it is a Messianic prophecy. Of course sceptics may assert, if they please, that the Gospel *record* is itself inaccurate, but the line ordinarily taken is other than this. To say that the Saviour simply accepts the current view as held by the Scribes for the mere sake of the argument, though He knew the facts were otherwise, is to play with the clearest words. There are simply two alternatives: either our Lord for the direct purpose of His teaching uttered this dual truth, which we are absolutely safe in accepting from His lips, or, inasmuch as He knew not better,

He taught and argued on the basis of this His imperfect knowledge, simply a fallible Rabbi, no freer from inerrancy than other Rabbis. It is no mere limitation that we should thus have to do with, that is essential to the very idea of Humanity, but absolute fallibility in teaching. Who shall venture to draw the dividing line in the Gospels, and say which of our Saviour's words are the Divine Oracles, and which, in this latter-day light, we are to take as matter for criticism, not for unquestioning obedience ?

It might be thought that, when we have such weighty and such repeated rulings by our Lord on the subject of the authority attaching to the Old Testament, those of the Apostles and Evangelists might be passed over as distinctly secondary. Still it is worth noting how absolutely every New Testament writer accepts, as the very warp and woof of his teaching, the truth of the Old Testament story and its essentially Divine character, and views it as absolutely underlying the message of the Gospel ; so that it is impossible to tear the two apart, if the New Testament itself is to have any claim on our obedience.

We think it was Lord Hailes, of whom it is told that, once having been with some friends when the conversation turned on Diocletian's attempt to destroy Christianity by annihilating the Sacred Books of the Faith, it occurred to him to ask himself the



question, Supposing that at the beginning of the fourth century it had been possible that the Gospels (or it may have been the New Testament) could have been destroyed, could they have been regained from the quotations of the Fathers of the Ante-Nicene age? Accordingly, he set himself to the task, and found that, with trifling gaps, the text could have been regained.

The Fathers of the first three centuries did not more completely view the Gospels as a basis past all challenge for their teaching than do the New Testament writers view the Old Testament. It would be a not uninteresting work to write an Old Testament history so far as the details can be got from the New Testament. To do so for themselves would be a very useful object-lesson for many readers. We only propose here to call attention to a few suggestive points.

The fall of man and the consequent curse (J) is referred to by St. Paul as though as much a piece of ordinary history as any other history (Rom. v. 14; 1 Tim. ii. 13 *f.*). In that wondrous afterglow of Old Testament story, Heb. xi., the record of Abel (J) and of Enoch (P) and of Noah (J and P), and many another saint of old, is told in words which will live and burn when many a scheme of "criticism" will have gone the way where many have already gone.

Every child knows how familiar the three names of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are in the New Testa-

ment as well as in the Old, in the mouth of the Saviour, as in those of His Apostles. See how Stephen, a man "full of the Holy Ghost," recalls the story of Abraham, with no doubt as to whether he is perhaps telling other than absolute truth. Yet the call of Abraham comes from J E, the covenant of circumcision from P the fabricator, the prophecy of the four hundred years' waiting (Gen. xv. 13) is but a "redactional addition" in J E (Acts vii. 6; *cf.* Gal. iii. 17). St. Paul dwells on the story of Hagar and Ishmael and on the choice of the younger son Isaac (Gen. xxi. 12, E; *cf.* Rom. ix. 7, Gal. iv. 22 *f.*).

That Abraham was justified by faith is a keynote of the Epistle to the Romans. That his faith in God reached its climax in the offering of Isaac is the teaching alike of Genesis (c. xxii.: E and J E) and of the Epistle to the Hebrews. That Melchizedek was an historic person, that he was a type of the Saviour, and that the record of him is placed in Genesis that we may see him in that light, is the obvious belief of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Yet Gen. xiv. is a fragment of "an Exilic (or post-Exilic) Midrash."

Or take the blessing of Jacob and Esau by Isaac their father (Heb. xi. 20). What is Gen. xxvii. but a mosaic of J and of E? The story of Joseph was one which evidently appealed to St. Stephen. After passing lightly over Isaac and Jacob, he lingers over

the selling into Egypt, the Divine protection which followed him, his delivery from prison, his exaltation by Pharaoh, and his rule over Egypt. Then follow the further scenes—the going down of the brethren for corn, the recognition on the second visit, the calling for Jacob and his family, and the settlement of the “seventy-five souls” in Egypt. [The “seventy-five” is merely the LXX. variant for the “seventy” of the Hebrew, and need not detain us here.] To St. Stephen, the whole story is the absolute truth of the God-given Word. How little did he think that the whole was a blend of heterogeneous elements, J and E and P and “redactional additions,” nay that the number of the souls (Gen. xlii. 26) is from one of “the later strata of the Priestly code.”

Or take Moses. It was evidently St. Stephen’s purpose to dwell at some length on the person of the great Lawgiver—his birth in the time of persecution, his rescue from the ark of bulrushes, his adoption by Pharaoh’s daughter, his flight from Egypt, the forty years’ retirement in Midian, the Divine call at the Burning Bush, and the return to Egypt at God’s command. He tells us of the wonders which God wrought in Egypt and at the Red Sea, and in the Wilderness, of the backsliding of the Israelites and of the building of the Tabernacle, according to God’s directions to Moses.

There is nothing particular to be gained by referring these points to their several “sources”; our

readers who think it worth while may do it for themselves. St. Paul, too, refers (1 Cor. x.) to various incidents of the Mosaic age, and adds the weighty comment, "They were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." He dwells, too (2 Cor. iii.), upon the vail of Moses as a fact which is of deep spiritual significance.

It is needless to multiply instances; indeed the point we are urging will be admitted by all, even if no instances at all are given. The writers of the New Testament unhesitatingly accept, not as a matter which they reach after a troublesome argument, but as the merest truism, the absolute truth of the historic books of the Old Testament. To this it will doubtless be answered—it has been so answered often:—The New Testament writers honestly believed in the perfect historic truth of these national records: they stood in this respect on the same plane of belief as other men of their nation; they lived in an uncritical age, and they could not be expected to see matters with a critical eye.

It was an uncritical age, let it be freely admitted, and the New Testament writers doubtless did not possess the critical faculty of these later centuries; but unless the New Testament is to be flung away after the Old, there must have been some warrant, some justification, for these beliefs.

As to what the belief of the New Testament writers was, there is clearly no dispute. Were they right in

this belief of theirs, or not? That they were not right, if the neo-critical decisions are right, is abundantly clear.

One crucial case is enough, that of Abraham. His personality is plainly dwelt on in the New Testament; yet he is but "a free creation of unconscious art." If the neo-critics be right in their conclusions, much of what entered into the belief of the New Testament writers, much of what they adduced as the substructure of their teaching, was plainly wrong. When St. Paul, as he addressed the chief of the Jews at Rome, was "persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses and out of the Prophets, from morning till evening," how much of that long argument must have been, if these "critics" are right, based upon unsound premises, leading therefore to futile conclusions.

But now, if much of what we read in the New Testament, not merely illustrative points, but often the very bases of argument, is to be rejected, we are brought to a very dangerous complication. We are now bidden to believe that the New Testament does indeed contain Divine teaching, but that a good deal of what the Apostles taught is to be discredited in view of the higher critical knowledge to which our age has reached. Yet who will draw the line and separate the pure gold from this inferior metal? To begin with, all the "critics" are not at one in having the courage of their opinions. One would be curious to know what is Professor Wellhausen's real opinion

of some of his English disciples, who make frantic efforts to combine their master's view with the belief that it allows them to think that the value of the Old Testament is not one whit impaired.

The grave question, however, is this. The outcome of the view taken of the Old Testament is of necessity that the same view must be taken of the New. If it is maintained that some parts of the Old Testament cannot be historically true, then the embodiment of such portions in the New Testament, and the rearing of a superstructure of argument upon them, must shake our trust in the New Testament also. Where is the process to end ?

We have now reached the point of being bidden to discard many things which the Apostles teach us, because "critics" have ruled that they are wrong. Can we suppose that the matter can rest here ? Is it conceivable that, when unholy hands are laid on the Gospels, and when even direct statements of the Saviour are declared not to rise above the level of the knowledge of the age in which He lived, the Gospel teaching as a whole should not be subjected to the same free handling that the older code has received ? We have seen Mosaism put into the crucible, and much of it declared to be fraud and imposture. Are we prepared to acquiesce in a like disintegration of Christianity ?

This is no merely imaginary danger. It will not do to say that the only effect of the new "criticism"

on the New Testament will be to correct the historical errors into which the Apostles fell, for this is to ignore the fact that on these points of history much of Gospel teaching itself is built up. There are already very grim signs to be seen. The theory of the *Kenosis* is being pressed, in spite of our Saviour's own claims for Himself, in defiance of the plain teaching of theology, in defiance of the obvious grammatical meaning of St. Paul's words (Phil. ii. 6 *f.*), to weaken the authority which should attach to this or that point of the Saviour's teaching, to which latter-day "criticism" may object. It is a perilous solvent. When the Saviour asserts, "Moses wrote of Me," how easy to say that He had voluntarily laid aside His higher knowledge, and so spoke, not being aware that He was quite wrong. How easy, too, to extend this line of argument to anything to which the coming age may object. There is nothing too sacred to remain unchallenged. Some wild dream of a theory is put forward and is promptly styled "brilliant criticism." If any scene in the Gospels is deeply marked in the hearts of believers, it is the Last Supper, with the injunctions and the promises looking on through the ages. Yet we are now boldly told that the Last Supper was simply a thing dreamt of by St. Paul in a vision, leading him to order the institution of the Eucharist, and the Synoptic Gospels were falsified to suit this. And this monstrous figment poses as history.

True criticism is one thing, what is commonly called "criticism" is very often quite another. The duty of Christian scholars in this time of unrest is plain enough. It is to sift and test, so far as they are able to do so, every new point which is brought before them, and to be willing to hold their judgment in abeyance, rather than hasten to conclusions. The "Men of the Great Synagogue," many centuries ago, urged as one of their three fundamental pieces of advice, "Be cautious in judgment." Why should we, who live in so critical an age, be less wise? Whatever we may accept in the way of modification of old views, let us remember that our Lord has taught us plainly that the Law of Moses was divinely appointed, and therefore, whatever errors may be in our ideas of it, no element of fraud or imposture can enter there. Nay more, no theory can possibly be true which conflicts with the direct teaching of Christ. This may seem to some a very needless truism; unfortunately it is a very necessary reminder. We are prepared as Christian men to receive and welcome the fullest light of the new learning. We are not prepared to be dragged at the wheels of those who would give us a discredited Old Testament, an emasculated New Testament, a fallible Christ.



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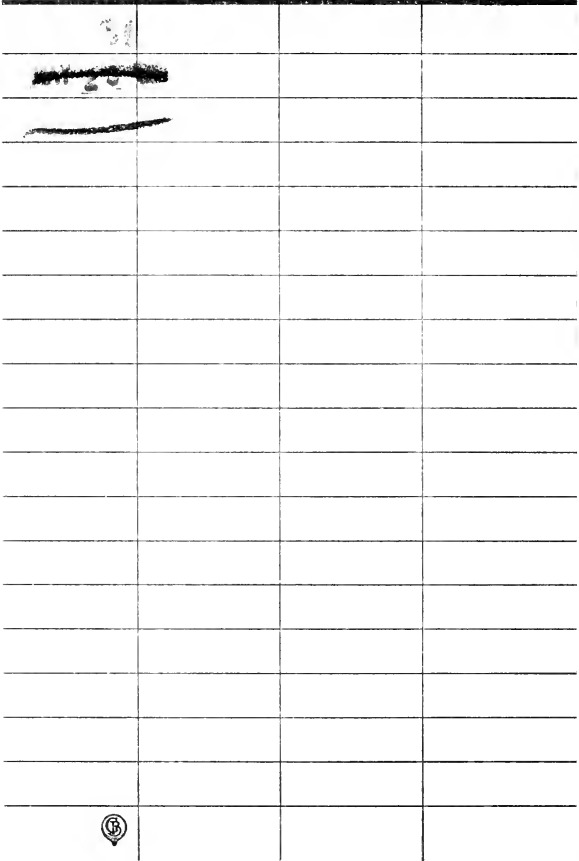
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